

GQ

INDIAN EDITION

WHAT A MAN'S GOT TO DO
APRIL 2015 ₹150

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the World

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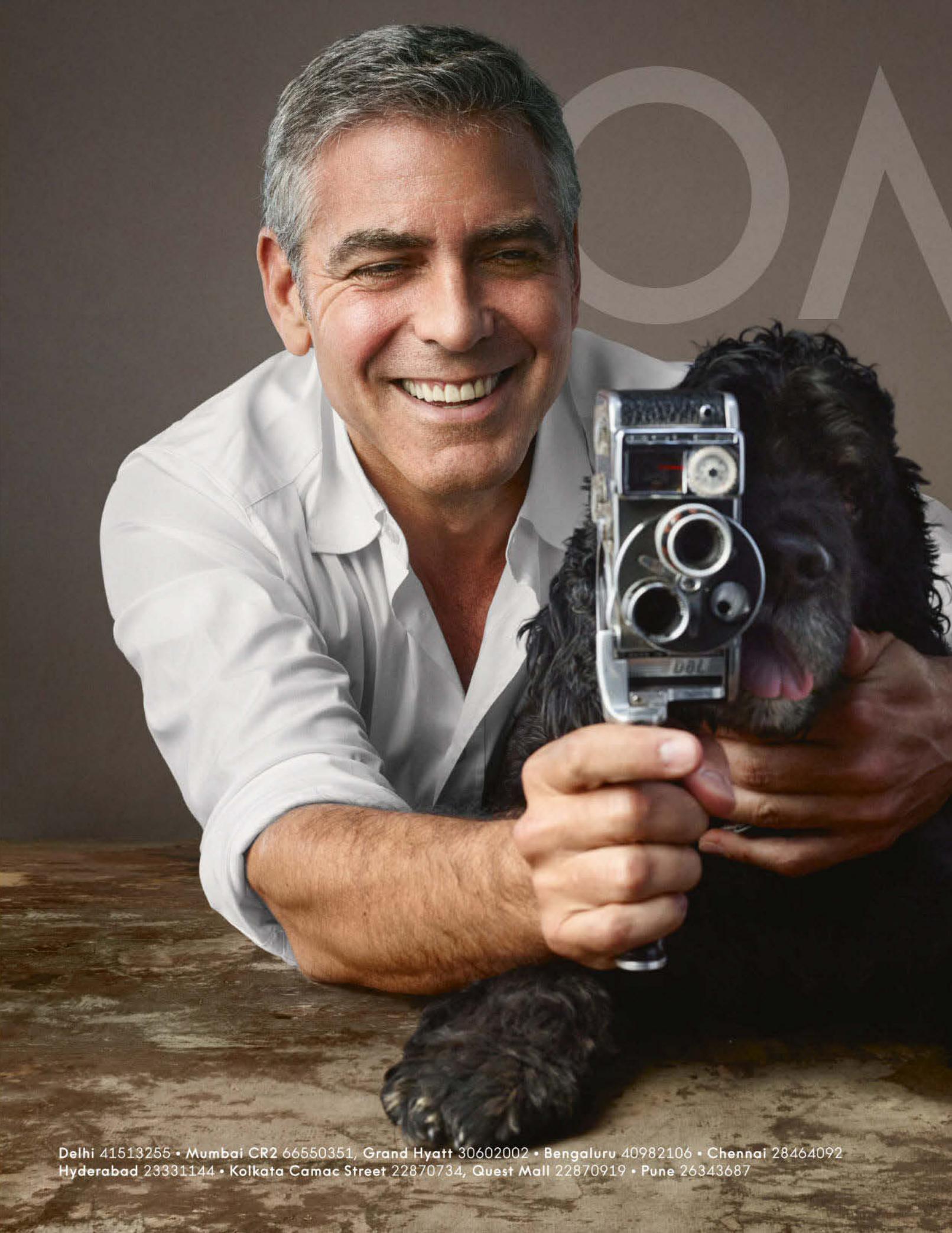


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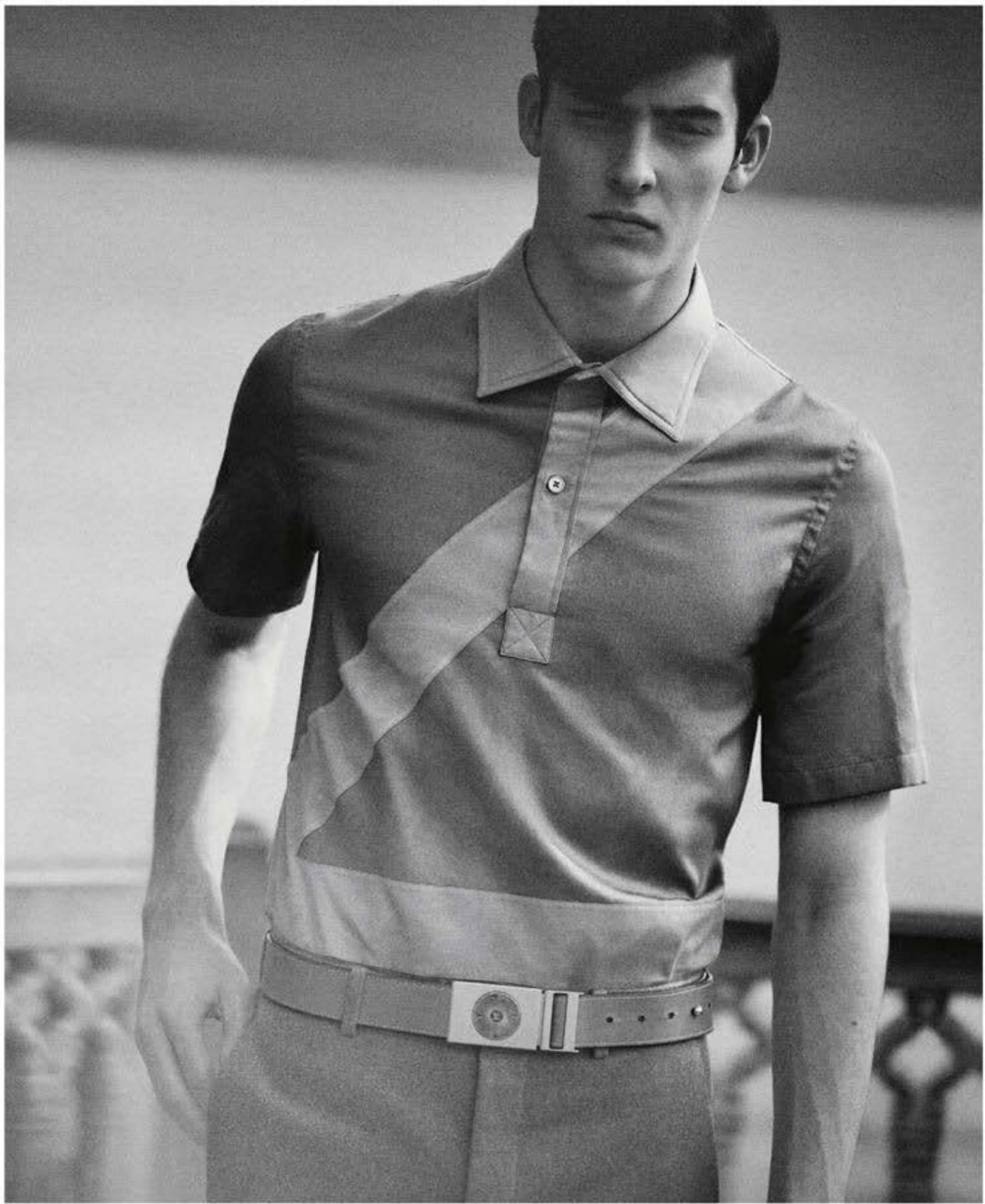


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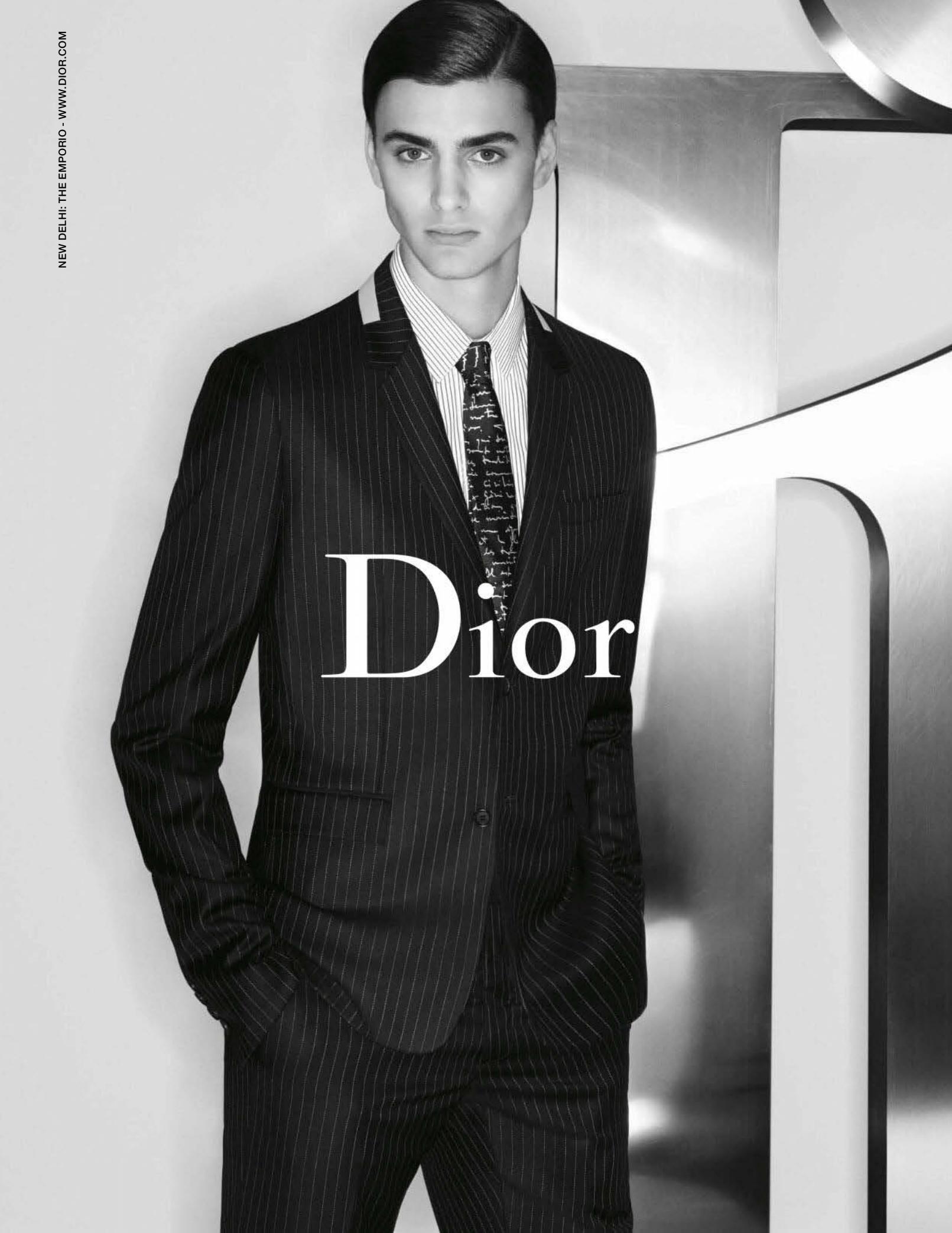
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Dior

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Nimrat Kaur's done it all
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GQ Contents

TRAVEL
SPECIAL

159

Strip show

Ducati's Scrambler straddles the line between rough rider and statement bike. *By Nicolas Stecher*



148

Get a life

ON THE COVER Blow your mind - and your pants - with these unconventional vacations. *Edited by Megha Shah*

- 34 Editor's Letter
- 40 Contributors
- 44 GQ Online
- 46 GQ Access
- 231 Where To Buy
- 232 GQ Central
- 238 Open Letter

Features

144 Bhatt naturally

Decoding Bollywood's walking contradiction, Mahesh Bhatt. *By Anil Thakraney*

ON THE COVER 166 India's secret internet censors You'll never see the web the way these digital janitors do. (Be glad.) *By Shruti Ravindran*

170 Bare essentials

Timepieces that leave nothing to the imagination. *By Lee Shin Goo*

200 The Gentlemen's Club

GQ gets up close and personal

with this month's stylish group of gentlemen. *By Dave Besseling*

208 Soft serve

Break the mould. *By Martin Vallin*

ON THE COVER 212 The bling dynasty

China's elite are getting a crash course in how to be snobs. *By Devin Friedman*

Good Life

49

The vodka special: what to drink and how to drink it; Buzz

Insider

65

On the *GQ* Playlist: Blues rocker Kanchan Daniel has our attention; celebrity books we never, ever, want to see; yea or nay - we just made your sequel-watching life easier; what to listen to on holiday; these summer festivals have more than just cool line-ups;



TODS.COM

GQ Contents

the best of pop culture this month; global phone hacks for your trip abroad; the gentleman's guide to being a good hotel guest

GQ Style 87

Set sail with Burberry's printed leather satchel; Paul Smith's latest collection is just like him - full of energy; accessories that travel really well; behind the scenes at Louis Vuitton's shoe factory; British art director Akmal Shaukat knows how to look good; how to wear hats, and other sartorial advice this month; The List

94 Smarten up
An Ivy League lifestyle begins with your wardrobe.
By *Shivangi Lolayekar*

Watch 135

Who was there, what they were wearing - your all-access pass to the world's most luxurious watch fair

140 The newsmaker
Hollywood's favourite geek Dev Patel talks watches, women and never being on time.
By *Varun Godinho*

Drive 159

Boats you'll want to get your hands on, and soon

GQ Talk 177

177 Science: Life on other planets, imagined.

By *Alok Jha*

180 Cities: A Bombayite mourns the loss of the South Bombay of old.

By *Uday Benegal*

182 Sex: I fell in love.

By *Chastity Fernandes*

184 Food: A case for trying new things. By *Anish Trivedi*

Grooming 223

The art of travel: how to pack your DOPP kit, the best salons and spas at airports across the world and the indie products to bring back from your foreign jaunts

49

2 nights, 20 bars in Singapore

Need we say more?
By *Megha Shah*





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TRAVEL
SPECIAL



Letter
from the
Editor



EXPLOSION in the air

While aboard an Indigo flight to Bangalore a few months ago, I noticed actor Vivek Oberoi seated in the first row. Flying can be harrowing for celebrities, with the constant stream of oddballs invading their personal space for selfies. The mood on this particular flight was especially fraught, the consequence of an incessantly wailing infant, who, as luck would have it, was seated next to the restless star. Most of us grumbled under our breath, but made our peace: the child and mother were travelling alone. Oberoi tried to beat the screams by curling his towering body into a semi-coital position, and attempting to doze off – ostensibly succeeding in falling sleep above the din.

Then, mere minutes before touching ground, the flight attendant leaned over and patted Oberoi, requesting him to wake up, and move his seat into landing position. The actor rubbed his eyes sleepily and exploded in anger, directing a gush of vitriol towards the hapless stewardess. A few moments later he noticed the entire cabin was witnessing this unseemly eruption – a sure-shot YouTube viral sensation had someone been sharp enough to record it. He bit his tongue, and looked around sheepishly. As the plane came to a grinding halt, Oberoi sprang to his feet and stepped into the aisle with his massive frame. He smiled winningly at the bewildered mother, and offered to cradle the shrieking baby in his arms while she got herself together.

This was one Vivek Oberoi performance I would actually pay for. But it was just another day on the road, in the sky. So get up there. You never know what you'll see.

Enjoy summer, enjoy the issue.

CHE KURRIEN
Editor



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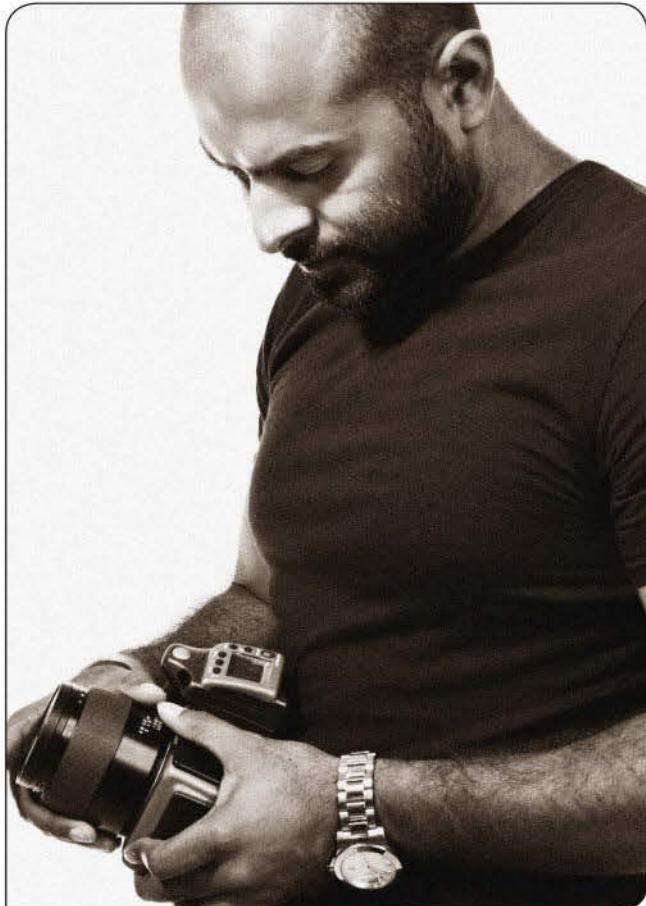
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GQ Contributors



R BURMAN

WHO: Photographer

WHAT: Captures our cover star Nimrat Kaur in "The homeland's hottest export", page 126

THE REAL WOMAN: The *GQ* man has tastes that are a cut above the ordinary – and Nimrat, with her lethal combination of intelligence, grace and beauty, perfectly fits the bill.

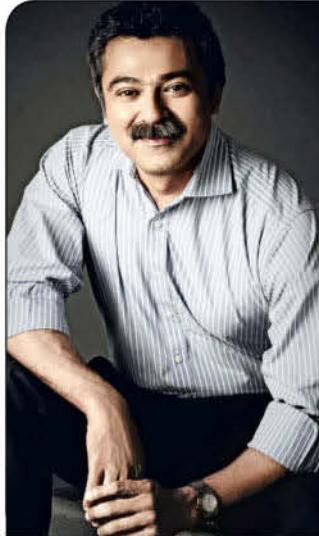


SHRUTI RAVINDRAN

WHO: Freelance journalist based in Mumbai

WHAT: Gets a glimpse of the dreary working lives of content moderators in "India's secret internet censors", page 166

X-RATED: I was struck by the story of one guy from a small town in Orissa. He grew up not knowing what the internet was. Content moderation quickly put an end to that, tossing him into the murkiest depths of the web, and now he's a shift leader, completely inured to and nearly philosophical about his work. He told me, "In internet, two things are there: porn and information. If you let the porn get to you, you can't do any work."



ANISH TRIVEDI

WHO: Writer; producer of mix-tapes at bars

WHAT: Encourages us to give new foods a try while on holiday, in "Fair and foul", page 184

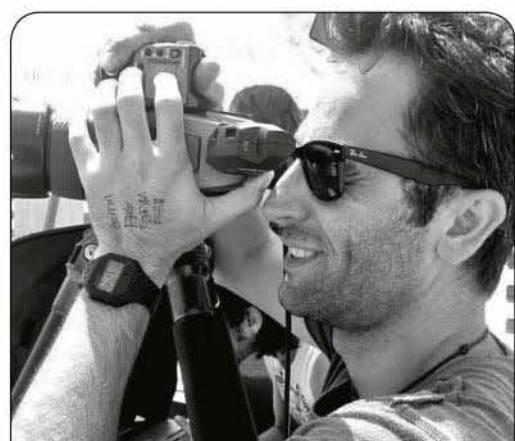
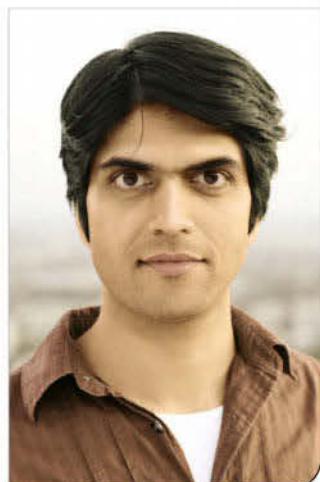
FOOLPROOF: I'd say Italy, any part of Italy, is safe for Indians when it comes to food – although staunch and strict Jains might have to argue with the chef about the garlic. Good luck winning that argument.

ALOK JHA

WHO: Science correspondent at ITV News in the UK

WHAT: Considers life on other planets in "Are we alone?", page 177

THE AGE-OLD QUESTION: If we find intelligent life, just think how much we could learn from them. They might have worked out ways to communicate faster than light, solved all environmental problems, cracked teleportation – and have amazing spaceships.



SEMIH KANMAZ

WHO: Photographer

WHAT: Captures Sushant Singh Rajput in "Watching the crown", page 186

PRINCE AMONG STARS: Sushant's got a great personality and takes his celebrity status really well: while shooting around the old Istanbul area, he was besieged by fans. He stayed cool throughout.



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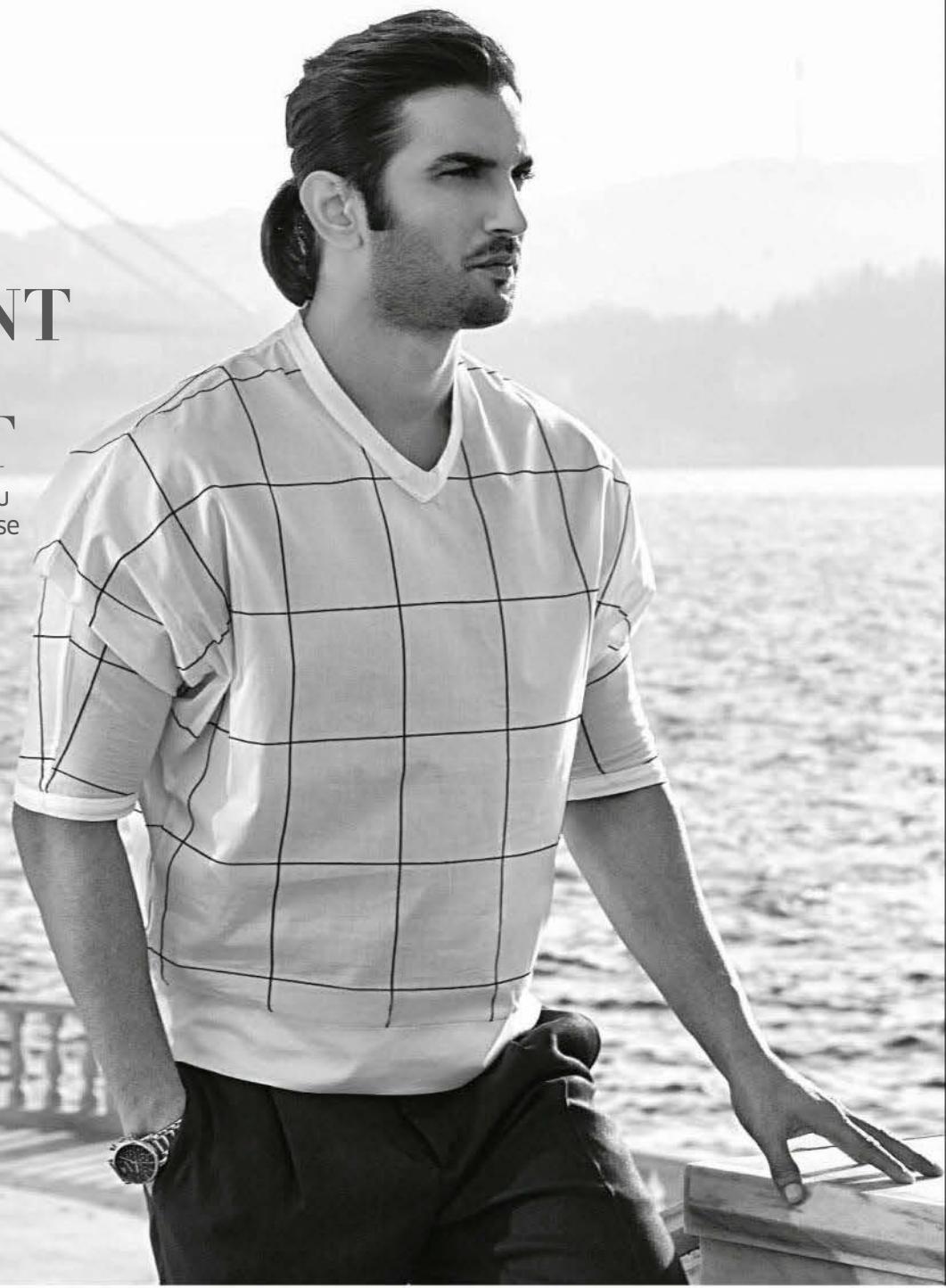
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A MASTERSTROKE

WHAT: The Take Solutions India Golf Awards
WHERE: Dusit Devarana, Delhi

Some of the finest golfers in the country recently congregated to celebrate the best in the sport. Powered by golfingindian.com, the second edition of the Take Solutions India Golf Awards saw *GQ* and the award's founder, Shaili Chopra, honour Shiv Kapur as the Best-Dressed Golfer. Among the attendees at the Dusit Devarana were Union Power Minister Piyush Goyal, P Chidambaram, Nikhil Mehra, industrialist Pawan Munjal and pro-golfer Anirban Lahiri. ☺



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NIGHTS
20
BARS IN
SINGAPORE

Influenced by Japanese methods of precision and American brashness, Singapore has become the most interesting breeding ground for cocktail innovation. Hopping from bar to bar, **Megha Shah** discovers hedonism at the core of a society that has embraced drinking as radically and suddenly as it has done anything else →

PHOTOGRAPHED BY JONATHAN WONG



There's a plastic head in my drink," I point out, stupidly.

"I believe there is," the blond bartender replies, seriously. "It's called Jiak the Ripper. She's floatin' in her own blood."

I am sitting at **The Cufflink Club**, a flashy, Sixties-cool bar (my fifth of the night) sandwiched between Hotel 81, Singapore's hotel of choice for one-night (or even one-hour) stands, and KTV bars – popular locations for locals to unwind in back rooms with attractive girls – peering at a glass full of blood-red liquid and a lifeless doll's head frozen in an ice cube peering back at me.

Around me are menswear bloggers sipping negronis with off-duty models and semi-employed cool guys sitting in a back room near the toilets – indicated by wall-mounted wooden figurines, one busty and one flat-chested.

The reason for my confusion is that I didn't order that drink. Christian, the blond bartender, has fashioned it for me. In the last two or three years, a smattering of hipster-meets-Manhattan speakeasies have invaded the city, ushering in a vibrant cocktail culture with an emphasis on home-made liquors, small-batch spirits, garden-grown ingredients



★★★

TOP
The "stealthy" reopening of Spiffy Dapper hasn't discouraged the crowds

RIGHT
Whitechapel's gruesome murders inspire the bartender at The Cufflink Club

BELOW LEFT
Located below a dodgy sign "Spa - Massage", you won't find a menu at Ah Sam's Cold Drink Stall



At Jigger & Pony: Babicka vodka, jasmine vermouth and absinthe foam; Monkey Shoulder whisky with popcorn absinthe jelly; Mezcal with rosemary honey and soda

and bespoke drinks crafted to suit your mood and personality.

I'm not sure what about me made him think I enjoy gore, but the drink is excellent. Fresh blood orange, dry peppery gin, with a burn that can only be soothed by the sourness from a sip of the same drink: fire and extinguisher in a single glass.

At the first bar I visited tonight, a buzzy, odd-shaped room called

The Secret Mermaid, located underground – quite literally – below a railway station near Raffles Place, a bro grabbed the menu from me, tossed it aside and said, "That's not what it's about, man." And then went on to order: "I used to spend all day on a tractor. Make me a drink that reminds me of the farm. You know, of dirt and diesel."

And it probably did taste of dirt and diesel, or something equally poetic. At **Oxwell & Co**, I had a piña colada on tap with spicy foam on top that was blowtorched into a marshmallow, while at **Ah Sam's Cold Drink Stall**, Sam, local mixologist and one of the coolest →

A smattering of hipster-meets-Manhattan speakeasies have invaded the city, with an emphasis on small-batch spirits, garden-grown ingredients and bespoke drinks crafted to suit your personality





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“The location” turns out to be a narrow doorway, crammed between two buildings, leading to a flight of probably the only unsterilized stairs in Singapore



At Ding Dong, a small wooden box acts as the glassware

men-about-town, made me an Old Fashioned laced with Milo, the chocolate drink. At **Ding Dong**, I had a pandan-infused creamy concoction spiked with absinthe, which was supposed to remind me of breakfast, and at **Operation Dagger** I tried an aged champagne and bitter ginger fizz that was created in owner Luke Whearty's laboratory, a sci-fi looking room caged off from the basement bar with a metal grill.

Just then I receive a text message from my friend. “Location confirmed. Be there.” He’s talking about the “stealth” opening – well, reopening – of **Spiffy Dapper** (“It’s common for bars to shut down or relocate within a year. The rents here are sky-high and

often increased if the bar does well.”)

It’s the opening night for the new venue, and the website is as mysterious as my friend’s message: a single page with the words “We make some damn good drinks, but what this place is really about is chilling the fuck out.”

“The location” turns out to be a narrow doorway, crammed between two buildings, leading to a flight of probably the only unsterilized stairs in Singapore, with a single bulb blinking at the top. It’s like something out of a Harry Potter movie for drunks. Up the stairs, a signless door comes into view. Inside, it’s surprisingly



TOP
Luke Whearty growls from his caged laboratory at Operation Dagger; from home-made whisky to home-made vermouth, there are no store-bought brands to be found here

busy. The owner, Abhishek Cherian George, fist-bumps me. “Welcome, dude,” he drawls. I perch myself on the long bar, which constitutes most of the dim room, next to my friend. Hilda, a petite, slick-haired mixologist with black studs, black nail paint and thick eyeliner, who looks like

something out of a manga comic, looks after me. She whips up her version of a gin and tonic using a house-made brew boiled with chinchona bark, adds Turkish tea and finishes it off with a blowtorched and caramelized slice of pomegranate. It’s really smooth, with hints of woodiness. Possibly one of the best G&Ts I’ve had.

Next I head to Laneway, an indie music festival held at Gardens by the Bay with a stellar line-up, including artists like Banks and St Vincent. Here I lie on the grass sucking boozy popsicles, next to a shaggy-haired guy named Steven, while people dressed in tutus and wreaths dance barefoot around us. Steven tells me he manages an underground culinary club which meets once a month, where guests send in their →

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saliva samples so that the food can be prepared based on their DNA. He extracts a cotton swab and insists I give him a sample so that he can prepare me a meal. I'm introduced to a pack of beer-happy locals who tell me they rarely sleep before 5am on weekends and offer to take me around. And soon I find myself at Orchard Centre, a shopping complex which at night turns into a series of seedy bars referred to, fondly, as "four floors of whores".

The next morning I wake up to the reality of having consumed most of 15 cocktails, but no hangover. Not a really bad one, anyway. I recall the advice of Sam, who told me to plan out my drinks in courses, like a dinner menu: white to red with wine, light to dark with beer, white spirits before brown, dry to sweet, low alcohol content to high. Never a martini as your second or third drink. And a glass of water after each.

My cellphone abruptly reminds me that I have to meet my friend at the **Manhattan Bar** for a boozy brunch. A quick shower later and



Plan drinks in courses, like a dinner menu: light to dark with beer, white spirits before brown, dry to sweet. Never a martini as your second or third drink. And a glass of water after each

I'm drinking again. The Manhattan Bar at the Regent Hotel looks like the kind of room Abe Lincoln might have drunk at, and has a menu featuring cocktails that time has forgotten, but you won't. The crowd here is chic, with expensive tastes. However, the brunch here is no hushed event: It's raucous and exciting and seems to acknowledge that unlimited cocktails are going to knock you over, and that you shouldn't be ashamed of that.



★★★

TOP
Cocktails on tap at Oxwell & Co

BELOW
A charged atmosphere and one of the best indie line-ups I've witnessed at Laneway

We move on to **Sugarhall**, an upscale bar with a selection of house-aged rums of over 300 varieties. Next, a visit to **The Library**, a bar that's accessed through a functioning gentleman's tailor's shop, where they'll measure you up and get you your perfect fit – and possibly hook you on a pair of Alfred Sargent shoes. And before I know it, it's midnight and I'm swaying to jazz at the ninth bar of the day, and the 20th of my trip, pondering drowsily over all the wondrous cocktails I've tried.

In a way, it's just Singapore making a point: that it can conquer cocktails just like it's conquered crime and dirt. But, god, what a point it's made. The cocktails left me coughing like a bong hit; buzzing like a line of coke; blasted skyward like a volleyball, and then spiked down, a speedball of delirium. They make drinks here with fire and liquid nitrogen, but it's never at the expense of ensuring the creations are drinkable. This is not art for art's sake, but a best-case scenario: form – the cocktail – following function – that is, drinking. ☺





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BELVEDERE SILVER SABRE 007

With only 100 bottles made (two of which are available in India), this rare edition is good enough for Bond - and for us.

CITADELLE 6C

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How to drink it



TRY SOME CITRUS, SUGAR AND SODA

You don't have to work hard to make a good vodka taste good. These three things will keep a party happy: two parts vodka, one part lemon juice, a dash of sugar. Ice. Soda. Repeat until everyone has a drink in their hands.



THE BEST USE FOR CHEAP VODKA... TURN IT INTO GIN

Gin is essentially unflavoured vodka. So all you need to do is get some botanicals and infuse them in vodka for a couple of days.

Ingredients: Juniper berries, lavender, cardamom, lemongrass, bay leaves, rosemary, fennel – you can take out anything you like and add anything you do, like vanilla, orange peel, cucumber etc.

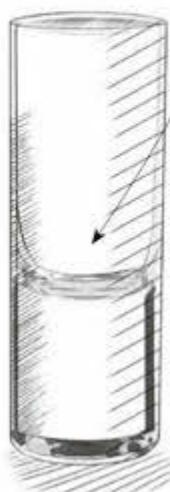
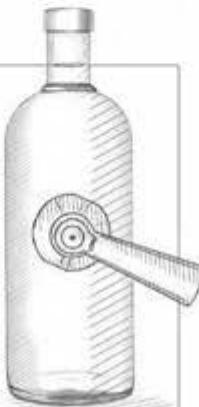
Method: Add the ingredients to vodka in a Mason jar and keep sealed. Taste every day until you are happy. Filter your artisanal gin and serve with tonic water and a spritz of lemon.

THE ONLY GLASS YOU NEED

You can drink vodka out of anything from a Mason jar to a coupe. But really, all that's required is a small Russian shot glass. It's the only time we'll recommend one. If you can't stand the thought of serving your friends in what you imagine is a frat party staple, though, get a big, heavy tumbler. Something that's laser-cut, clean-lined and sort of unbreakable. (That's not a challenge.) Get six of them.

KNOW A GOOD VODKA FROM BAD

Flavour has very little to do with vodka. After all, vodka consists overwhelmingly of two molecules, C_2H_5OH (ethanol) and H_2O , with only trace elements of everything else. So it's really all about the texture, how it feels in your mouth. A good vodka is **creamy** and **smooth**. It will smell **grainy** and have a **thick texture** when frozen. A bad vodka will be harsh, bitter tasting, watery and smell like medicine. If vodka burns your palate, it's most likely of poor quality. Of course, if you tend to drink too much, the awful stuff can also help you cut back.



SIP IT, DON'T SHOOT IT

Ask an Eastern or Northern European about a vodka cocktail and he'll look at you as though you've just asked if you can teach his daughter pole dancing. Traditionally, vodka is sipped slowly from your shot glass, chilled to viscousness in the freezer (vodka won't freeze, try it) as you stuff yourself desperately with pickles and black bread. You are also expected to finish an entire bottle by yourself. But don't try that unless you have some Russian blood in you.



LEMONADE THAT GETS YOU HIGH

A good party is about having enough choices. Some need soda, some need ice and some need a good bang-infused cocktail.



Step 1: Procure your cannabis paste. How you do this is your business. (Hint: visit a Shiv temple.)

Step 2: Activate it. Spread the paste in a pan and bake at 225 degrees C for 60 minutes.

Step 3: Transfer to a big Mason jar and add the vodka. The higher the proof, the better the extraction. Seal with an airtight lid and shake. Store in a dark place at room temperature for 48 to 72 hours (although longer will certainly not hurt), shaking occasionally. Strain through a muslin cloth.

Step 4: Assemble. Throw some ice cubes into a highball glass. Add 3ml infused liquor, which should be the correct dose to get you pleasantly high for several hours, but not put you in a catatonic stupor. Add 60ml of lemon juice and 45ml of sugar syrup. Stir and top with 100ml of club soda. Wait an hour before deciding you need another glass.

Note: GQ does not endorse this, necessarily

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THE MANLIEST VODKA COCKTAILS

For a while now, vodka wasn't taken very seriously in the world of cocktail. Maybe it had to do with sorority girls and soda, raves and cranberry flavouring. But the thing about this spirit is that it's like a blank canvas that takes on the characteristics of whatever it's mixed with. So, if the ingredients are sub-par and the measurements off, it can be wretched. But with the right stuff, it can turn into something pure, even manly

THE MOSCOW MULE

It was fashioned by the owner of Smirnoff in the Forties (when vodka was very unpopular in the US) and the owner of the Cock & Bull pub (whose spicy ginger beer was very unpopular) and served in a copper mug - sourced by yet another friend with business problems. But it's smooth, refreshing and even elegant, so god bless America.

THE VODKA MARTINI

Not a real martini (that's made with gin), but still the sexiest drink in the room. Plus, it's so much simpler to think of yourself as an international man of mystery with one of these in your hands.



LONG ISLAND ICED TEA

The LIIT should be reserved for dares and 21st birthdays. But you can't deny it's the strongest stuff with a straw you can order at a bar.

THE WHITE RUSSIAN

Popularized by *The Big Lebowski*, this sweet, creamy deceiver looks so innocuous it's hard to take it seriously. But beware, it's so tasty it'll sneak up and kick your ass.

THE BLOODY MARY

Iconic and indispensable, the Bloody Mary is good any damn time. And with its ability to cure a hangover, it may remain a useful citizen of the Republic of Tipple for years to come.

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BUZZ

ALL THAT'S HOT THIS MONTH

HYPER-LOCAL

Want to have French-Japanese fare in Mumbai? Thank god for pop-ups. The latest one's at the **JW Marriott**, and curated by Singapore-based 4Xfour, which is bringing two Michelin-starred chefs to take over the kitchen of Mezzo Mezzo for one week each. From April 8-12 it's Chef Laurent Peugeot from Le Charlemagne, a charming eatery located among the vineyards of Burgundy. The cuisine: innovative French with Japanese accents – think ham and cheese crêpes laced with miso. Week Two (April 15-19) will have Giovanni D'amato of Relais & Chateaux cook up earthy Italian fare using artisanal methods and rare ingredients.

₹8,000 per person



WORK PLACE

The way the world does business has changed. And if the Palladium Hotel in Mumbai is any measure, it involves selecting a wine from a walk-in humidor and enjoying it in a private lounge while discussing year-end figures. The hotel's 36th floor, with views of the Racecourse, is now a members-only high-rollers' lounge called **Equus**. It's got off-the-moment art on the walls, four kitted-out conference rooms, a bar, a wine cellar with 900 different wines, a wine lounge and a dining room where different haute cuisines are served, so you can chow down on some serious work.

Membership by invitation only. To request one, email the hotel at equus@palladiumhotel.in



COCKY COCKTAILS

Few liqueurs are acceptable in a man's drink, the foremost of which is **Cointreau**. Made with bitter Caribbean and sweet Curaçao oranges macerated in neutral alcohol, it's a steady ingredient in every well-made margarita. It will also turn anything it's mixed with a deceptive citrusy-sweet. Our favourite ways to drink it:

★ White Lady at Arola, Mumbai

Cointreau, lemon juice, gin and black pepper served in a chilled martini glass

★ Mimosa at B Bar, Delhi

Champagne, orange juice and Cointreau. Simple sophistication

★ Breakfast Martini at Bang, Bengaluru

Vodka, marmalade and Cointreau. The best way to cure a hangover



BED-TIME

For the holidaying horophile is the new **Hotel L'Orologio Venezia** – or Hotel L'O, to be precise – in Venice, with a design aesthetic derived from the owner's own watch collection. The crown-shaped doorways, skeletal artwork and original mechanisms displayed at the reception will wind you up. venezia-hotel-orologio.com



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EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW THIS MONTH



The Tambourine Woman

Meet the country's newest singing sensation, whose shouts and chants will have you grooving to the blues



What do the greatest singers of all time – from Janis Joplin to Amy Winehouse, from Asha Bhonsle to Susheela Raman – have in common? Their rhymes and rhythms irrevocably originate from deep within the soul. Listen to 26-year-old Kanchan Daniel sing and you’ll know what we mean. As frontwoman of Mumbai-based blues-rock outfit Kanchan Daniel & The Beards, she’s a force unto herself. There is, obviously, her voice: ample, lilting, all-consuming. And then there are her hypnotic performances, where she is a haze of combustive energy, rattling her tambourine and shaking a leg to the beat. In a candid chat, she tells *GQ* about her music, passions and life-altering events that, ironically, set her on the right course.

When did you decide to become a musician?

Music is actually my hobby. I lead a double life: I’m really a clinical psychologist, and music is what I come back to after a long day. I’ve never wanted to make it a 9-to-5 job.

What got me onto the stage was a brush with cancer when I was 17. After I got better, I thought, why the hell am I not doing this? It felt like a second chance – and I took it.

Is there a connection between this experience and your chosen music genre?

I just go all out with the blues. We have a song called “Superficial” which, I think, embodies the spirit of the genre: You can’t pretend to play or understand the blues – it comes from deep within. When you’re pissed off, you want to sit in front of an audience and tell them, “Look, bitch, I’m pissed off.” Or if you’re going through heartbreak, you can use blues music to tell people this is what we’re all feeling, together.

TOP BY MORPHE
MANIFESTO AT BOMBAY
ELECTRIC. PANTS BY
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PREVIOUS PAGE:
LEATHER JACKET BY
RARA AVIS. DENIMS
BY BURBERRY

Why choose the blues in a scene overrun with alt-rock and EDM?

Yeah, it’s niche, not everybody listens to it. There’s only one other band I can think of who dabble in this genre: Soulmate. But we play blues-rock, which is a heavier variety, with the blues at its core. Expressing myself in this form comes naturally to me. Our genre’s a little difficult to put out there but we’ve tried to add our own element to it, so that everyone from the older generation to the newer one can relate to it. So far we’ve found that this works.

What are your songs about?

It’s a mix – some of it’s absurd, some based on personal experiences and other is stuff that we just came up with in the jam room – but it’s almost always fun. “Black Heart” is my baby: When I wrote it, I visualized this woman who isn’t able to give up on loving this guy who’s been treating her like shit. Then we have another song about a guy who thinks his next-door neighbour is a spy; the idea behind it is that you can love somebody, but there’ll always be that one thing about them that you’ll never know.

Tell us about your music inspirations.

My parents used to listen to a lot of Boney M and Rolling Stones. I also grew up around a lot of European hippies. My grandfather used to be a professor in Denmark, and when he came back home there were people from all over Europe at his place. So I’ve always been exposed to this kind of music. I’d listen to a lot of rock bands in school, went through a weird minimal house phase in college and only really got into the blues later. I was listening to Janis Joplin, Hendrix, The Doors. My favourite guitarist of all time is Joe Bonamassa.

Who are Kanchan Daniel & The Beards?

The band – Mukesh the keyboardist, Anand the bassist, Varoon the drummer and Kush, our 17-year-old guitarist – came together about three years ago. Mukesh heard me singing in the audience at a gig and invited me to his studio. After a few line-up changes, we’ve now arrived at this group. The name happened because Mukesh and Anand look similar: Everyone kept mistaking them for each other, because of their beards. It just stuck – so much so that we told Kush he’d have to grow a beard by the next gig if he wanted to play with us. Now, we don’t allow him to shave *[laughs]*.

What do you prefer – the studio or the stage?

Oh, definitely the stage! I love gigging, feeding off the energy I get from the audience. We’ve had some epic ones in the last year, at High Spirits in Pune and at The New Wave festival in Goa.

So you must have your share of “crazy” fans.

Yeah, I’ve gotten marriage proposals on Facebook and long biodata-style posts demanding a date. Those usually go to my “other” inbox. The internet’s a weird place. In person, most people are rather nice, except for this one guy who came up to me after a gig and said, “You smell good.” I was horrified.

And what do you do when you’re not working or making music?

When I’m not in the studio, or if we’re not jamming, I’m learning to play the bass guitar. I play the keyboard, too, and even tried (but failed) to learn how to play the didgeridoo. Basically, music is my dope. 



Mumbai BOSS Store Palladium Mall
Delhi BOSS Store Emporio Mall

WRITERS' BLOCK

GIRL ON FIRE: THE ART OF CORPORATE DRESSING

BY NICKI MINAJ

The global pop star and fashion icon flips the bird at conservatives and comes up with the power-dressing mantra you need to snake up the 21st century corporate ladder: It's A-OK to look sexy (read: bright colours, animal prints, fur, plastic), even if you're stuck in your cubicle all day. Can't imagine pulling it off without making an ass of yourself? Flip through the coffee table book - which houses the largest collection yet of Nicki Minaj portraits - for your sartorial inspiration. Before you know it, pink Friday will be here.

"You'd better listen to her."

-Kanye West

GREEN THUMB: SUPERHEROES IN THE GARDEN

BY HRITHIK ROSHAN

"Man was put on this planet to tend to god's garden. In this, the original occupation, there is much solace to be found." Thus begins the Bollywood star's scintillating authorial debut, which documents his new hobby: horticulture ("it's just something I picked up on sabbatical"). He writes about lovingly tending to his prize-winning azaleas and juicy red tomatoes, which have become the talk of B-town. A mix of anecdotes, tips and philosophical insights, this is an enriching read, guaranteed to get your petunias winking at you.

"Nipped it in the bud!"

-Rakesh Roshan

THE INHERITANCE OF LOCKS: CUT YOUR HAIR LIKE A DICTATOR

BY KIM JONG-UN

Leadership isn't just about being a visionary; it's also about looking the part, writes North Korea's prestigious head of state. In this hair-raising account, Kim Jong-Un tells us of the strong relationship between hairstyles and power, drawing from a rich legacy of Korean coiffures and pompadours, as well as the real-life experiences of Hitler, Idi Amin and Chairman Mao.

"A shingling of epic proportions!"

-Arindam Chaudhuri



THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO A HAPPY MARRIAGE

BY SALMAN KHAN

Having studied the dynamics of successful marriages (brother Arbaaz's, BFF Shah Rukh's and previous flame Aishwarya's), Bhai's come up with a blueprint on how to make sure yours doesn't go off the road. The painfully honest memoir focuses on the details: for example, it isn't okay to ignore your fiancée's calls (or her) when you're around hotter women; or how to make up for pretty much anything by buying her expensive jewellery. Or a jet. The buck doesn't stop there, either.

"I was hooked."

-Sanjay Dutt

NEVER SAY NEVER: THE ART OF CHARM, CLASS & DISCRETION

BY ARNAB GOSWAMI

You've heard him talk (from three houses over). Now, read his equally compelling book* on how to win friends and influence people. The country's most prominent news anchor gives us the definitive guide to making conversation like, well, himself. Rule No 1: Never, ever, ever... speak out of line. Once you're through the other 999 gems, Arnab guarantees you'll leave the world speechless with your debonair, shiny new personality.

"Unputdownable."

-Chetan Bhagat

*Comes with a DVD, audio book and free subscription to Arnab's new Arnab-only channel on Nation DTH

STILL CREATED BY THE FAMILY
THAT FIRST CREATED IT.



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ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT

We're living in an Age of Sequels. So we decided to sift through the never-ending stack of film franchises for the ones worth your time



MAD MAX: FURY ROAD

WHEN: May 2015
WHAT TO EXPECT: Tom Hardy. As the strong, silent, aggrieved type. Charlize Theron. As Furiosa, the scarred, intense, determined-to-survive type. Sounds promising already, doesn't it?

YEA: Because apocalypses and trying to survive them together make for a sure-fire plot winner.



TRANSFORMERS 5

WHEN: June 2016
WHAT TO EXPECT: Like all summer movies in line to become blockbusters, this one will have its share of destruction, attempts at world domination and major ka-ching at Hamley's.

NAY: Because it's Michael Bay - the man responsible for Transformers testicles, wimpy ninja turtles and other such extraordinary disasters.



FURIOUS 7

WHEN: April 2015
WHAT TO EXPECT: Fast cars and revenge plots. Plus, Jason Statham's stone-faced action routines. The Torreto family has it coming.

YEA: Because you get to watch the last of Paul Walker on screen.



RESIDENT EVIL: THE FINAL CHAPTER

WHEN: September 2016
WHAT TO EXPECT: An entire race is at stake. So Milla Jovovich will once again have to wear extra tight leather.

YEA: But only because this story will finally be laid to rest. We hope.

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE - ROGUE NATION

WHEN: July 2015
WHAT TO EXPECT: Yet another life-threatening attack on Ethan Hunt, and his spy agency IMF (Impossible Missions Force, duh).

NAY: Because Tom Cruise running shirtless was last considered an appealing sight circa 1996.



PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: DEAD MEN TELL NO TALES

WHEN: July 2017
WHAT TO EXPECT: A kohl-lined, dreadlocked, bejewelled Johnny Depp doing the same old, same old.

NAY: For a kohl-lined, dreadlocked, bejewelled Johnny Depp doing the same old, same old. Why can't he learn a lesson or two from Keira Knightley and just move on?

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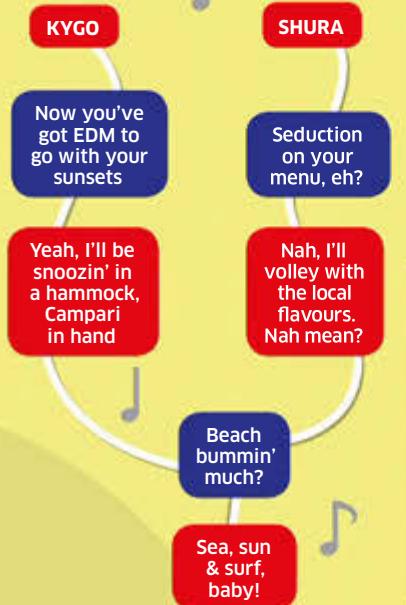
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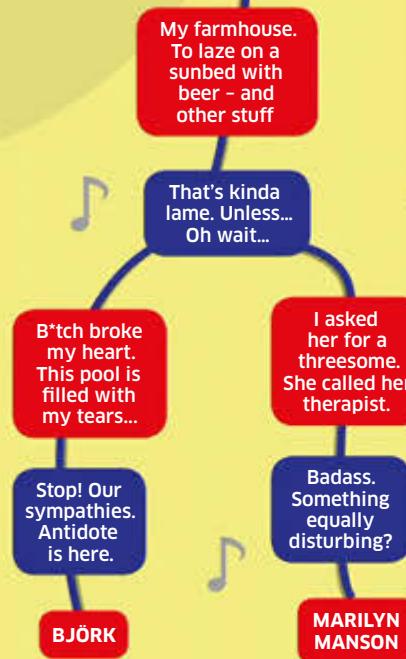
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What new music should be on my vacation playlist?

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WHAT'S REAL FEELS REAL

The House of Raymond presents Raymond Linen – a luxurious 100% pure range of linen fabric that lets you look dapper and keeps you cool right through Spring/Summer 2015

Whether you're headed for a lazy Sunday brunch or a snazzy springtime wedding, this season up your style quotient with vibrant hues of sunny yellows and bright blues. Raymond Linen – an all-new range from the Raymond Group, brings you an elegant line-up of linen fabrics that never fail to make heads turn.

Thanks to its superior weave and fibre that make way for the perfect fit and look, the fabrics by Raymond Linen come in an eclectic spectrum of colours, ranging from sun-kissed neutrals and pastels to vibrant hues of ochre, salmon pink, leafy green and more. Taking cues from trends around the world, Raymond Linen allows you to move away from the clichés and experiment with edgy textures, intriguing motifs and stylish prints.

As temperatures soar, add a touch of spazzatura to your wardrobe with jackets, shirts, trousers and bundis all crafted from Raymond Linen – it's as real as you can get.

**For more information,
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MUSIC

Hit the road, Jack

Haven't made holiday plans yet? These music festivals are your chance – nay, the very reason – to travel to places you've never seen before

▼ TOMORROWLAND

When: July 24-26
Where: Boom, Belgium
Why: Fifteen stages sporting active volcanoes, giant disco balls, smoke cannons and the hippest DJs of today – including Alesso, Hardwell and Avicii. Even Lewis Carroll couldn't have dreamed up something like this.

WILDLIFE MUSIC FESTIVAL

When: June 6-7
Where: Brighton City Airport
Why: Four-time Grammy winner Sam Smith, Disclosure & Rudimental (also the founders) are headlining. And then there's the Wu-Tang Clan and our new indie favourites of the year, er, Years & Years.

NEW ORLEANS JAZZ FESTIVAL

When: April 24-May 3
Where: New Orleans, US
Why: Don't be fooled by the word "jazz" in the title. Buddy Guy will take care of that while everyone from Pitbull to Lady Gaga, Lenny Kravitz and Elton John take you on a romp.

▲ SNOWBOMBING FESTIVAL

When: April 6-11
Where: Mayrhofen, Austria
Why: This one's set among alpine peaks. So, when you aren't hitting the slopes on your skis, chill in the forest with Basement Jaxx, Carl Cox, Skrillex and Fatboy Slim.

GOVERNOR'S BALL

When: June 5-7
Where: Randall's Island, NYC
Why: The definitive festination for the best alt-rock and pop on the planet, featuring The Black Keys, Lana Del Ray, Björk, Florence + The Machine and, to add some fun to the mix, Weird Al Yankovic.

COACHELLA

When: April 10-12 and 17-19
Where: Indio, California
Why: It's Coachella – do you really need another reason? Pretty much anyone worth their salt will be singing on its stages – from Tame Impala to Lykke Li, Jack White to St Vincent, Drake to Jungle.

FIB

When: July 16-19
Where: Benicàssim, Spain
Why: An island festival with The Prodigy, Portishead and Bastille on the line-up – por qué no?

ULTRA FESTIVAL

When: June 12-13
Where: Seoul, Korea
Why: If you must choose to see David Guetta and Hardwell live, you might as well do it in South Korea. At least that way you'll experience something new in the process.





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Laura Barns suicide
Laura Barns party photos
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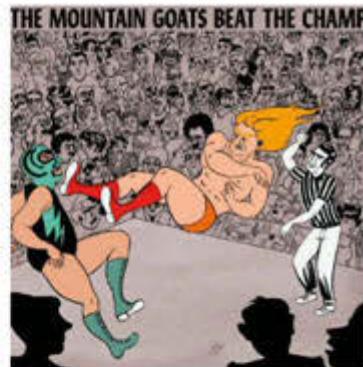


MUSIC

Beat The Champ

By The Mountain Goats

Music inspired by pro-wrestling? WWE and folk-indie may strike you as strange bedfellows, but listen to "The Legend Of Chavo Guerrero", and you'll probably be knocked over by their rustic rhythms.



Game Of Thrones Season 5

Tyrion Lannister is still alive – but for how long? This time, Stannis Baratheon and Danaerys Targaryen take centrestage in an ever-intensifying war. But it is you, dear viewer, who must always prepare to be double-crossed.

From April 12 at 9pm on HBO Defined



TV

FILM

Unfriended

By Levan Gabriadze

The spirit of one Laura Barns invades a group chat session on Skype to avenge the high school shaming that had led to her suicide. Forget poltergeists and chainsaws; what's truly disturbing about this is that *none* of them considers logging out. #millennials



Ex Machina

By Alex Garland

An employee of "the world's largest internet company" wins a weekend at his boss' mountain cabin, only to discover he's actually been tapped to "test" Ava, a fully formed, rather gorgeous robot. Which is a relief, given that the last AI fantasy featured only one thing we could call sexy: Scarlett Johansson's voice.

Detective Byomkesh Bakshy!

By Dibakar Banerjee

The country's oldest detective (based on the novels by Sharadindu Bandyopadhyay) has been given a Bond-esque makeover to suit 21st century sensibilities. We have, however,

deduced from the slick-looking trailer that Sushant Singh Rajput's acting skills still haven't evolved – and that twitchy moustache doesn't help him, either. Maybe he needs a few martinis to get there.



BOOK

Aarushi: Anatomy Of A Murder

By Avirook Sen

The Talwar murder case had us all gripped for a good five years: It was a mash of murder, suspense and intrigue of Hitchcockian proportions. In this book, journalist and writer Avirook Sen plays detective and attempts to decode what went down in Noida in 2008.

AVIROOK SEN

AARUSHI

Anatomy
of a Murder





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**TRAVEL
SPECIAL**

ROAMIN' HOLIDAY

HOW TO PREP YOUR PHONE FOR TRAVEL ABROAD
Sky-high data rates are not uncommon when surfing overseas. Whether you're fleeing for two days or two months, prepare for your global excursion before you board the plane

3

Minimize background data transfers
Switch off automatic email downloads and background app refreshes. Also deactivate automatic syncing to services like iCloud, Google and Dropbox. While abroad, only download and sync when you have access to Wi-Fi.

4

Grab some apps to help manage your usage
If your international plan charges for texting, download WhatsApp or Line (stickers!) and use one of those instead. The app My Data Manager provides alarms to notify you about your data consumption and lets you limit mobile data usage via the device settings. It's available on iOS and Android.

5

Neuter your less-used apps
Disable background data usage for any feature that isn't critical. Allow only your most needed apps to access your precious data pipe. In iOS, go to Settings > Cellular and scroll down to your list of apps. In Android, go to Settings > Data Usage.

6

Last resort: go Wi-Fi only
If you can't get an international plan for your destination, the safest option is to turn off data roaming entirely. In iOS, the toggle switch is under Settings > Cellular. In Android, it's under Settings > Networks > Data Usage. Phone calls and texts will come through, but data will only be sent and received when there's Wi-Fi available.



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TRAVEL
SPECIAL

YOU GOT SERVED

Believe it or not, being a guest at a hotel isn't that different from crashing at a friend's place. So try not to leave behind a trail of crumbs, skid marks – or bad blood

If I got a rupee for every time I heard someone tell me about a nightmarish hotel stay, I'd be able to launch that secluded BnB in the Himalayas I've always dreamed about. It's always the same: The blame for a bad holiday inevitably lies with the asshole staff at that stupid seven-star hotel with no hot water and bad Wi-Fi.

Except, this is paradoxical: The entire raison d'être of the hospitality industry is to make sure you're comfortable, in all your demanding, tantrum-throwing, often-drunken glory. Ever stopped and asked yourself why that plumbing/Wi-Fi issue wasn't fixed at the drop of a call to the front desk? Was it, maybe, because you decided to holler into the phone like a self-important twat?

You'd think it common sense: Just because you pay hotel staff to be at your beck and call does not make it okay to treat them like shit. And now, they're also in avenger mode: Sites like Guestscan (a

UK-based database that allows hoteliers to check guests out before they check in) are their way of getting even. So unless you want to be clubbed with the worst guests in human history – which, by the way, include Michael Jackson and Christian Bale – and never get good service again, you might want to pack some basic decency along with those tighty-whiteys you plan to live in for the next few days.

DON'T THROW A HISSY FIT WHEN CHECKING IN. Or start tapping your fingers on the counter while waiting. Or complain loudly about the queue. Everyone – including the agents behind the desk – wants you to be ensconced by the pool with your martini as fast as possible. Even Vinny Chase knows that to be served you must get in line.

TIP GENEROUSLY. A few notes offered here and there, to everyone from the doorman to

the concierge, the waiter at the restaurant to the attendant who takes away your laundry, will show your appreciation. And earn you their loyal allegiance for your stay – so that when you want that extra 30ml of vodka in your cocktail, you've got your guy.

DON'T TREAT YOUR ROOM LIKE A PAINTBALL ARENA. Sure, there's an army over at Housekeeping, but imagine their

plight at the sight of your *Hangover* re-enactment: sheets on the floor, dirty dishes on the bed, wet towels askew, pee in the electric kettle, wine splotches on the wallpaper... Killer party it may have been, but they won't be laughing when they wonder what the hell went down last night.

DON'T PILFER. We know it's tempting, but they always know when the lightbulbs, shampoo bottles and bathrobes go missing. They might even be willing to let that go, but slipping food from that complimentary breakfast into your man purse for road munchies? You're the joke in the kitchen.

BE POLITE, AT ALL TIMES. Because, while you're making hay and moves and love under the sun, they're working their asses off dealing with a multitude of, well, your type. Say your sorries and thank you's, and you'll be surprised at how willing they are to turn a blind eye to your Dunston-esque behaviour. 



go sharp





go sharp



go sharp



 **BLACKBERRYS**

Style

GQ

EDITED BY VIJENDRA BHARDWAJ
& SHIVANGI LOLAYEKAR

Shore shot

In an era of stiff black cases, it's this standout **Burberry** satchel that'll help you glide through in style

TRAVEL
SPECIAL

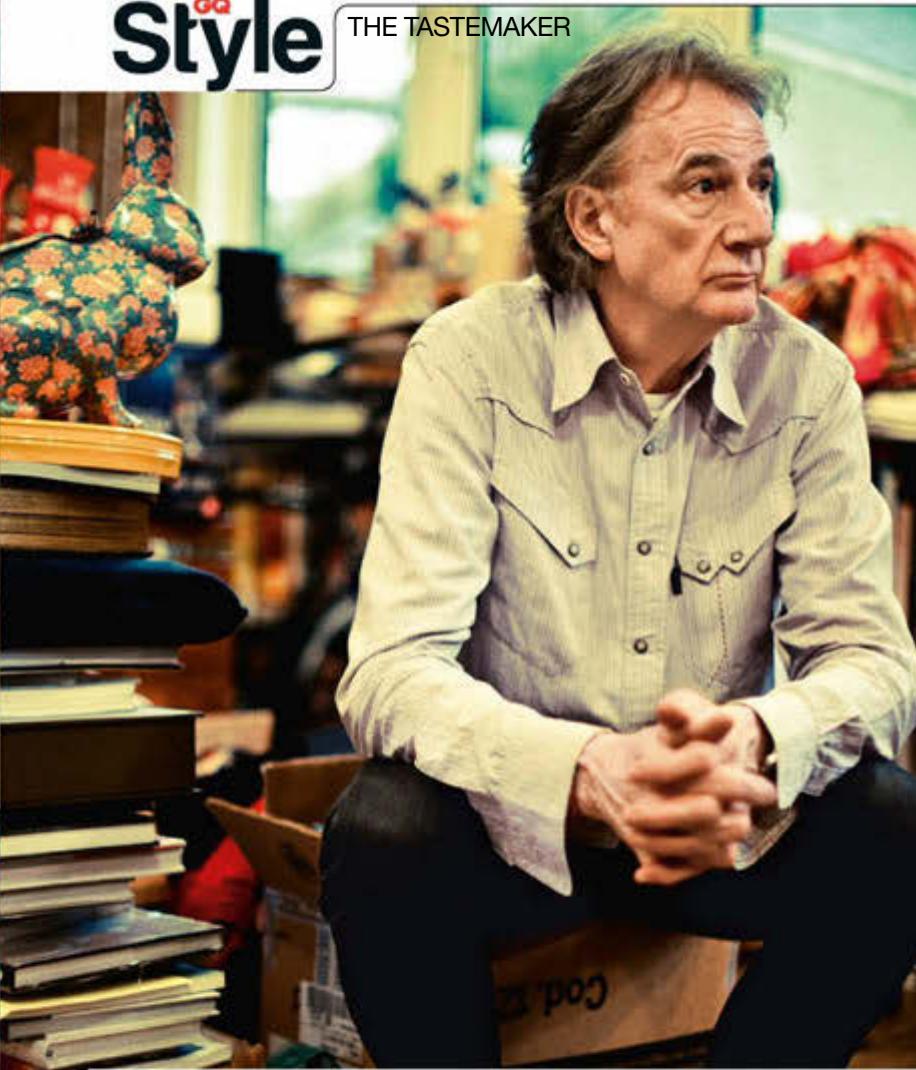
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“Never go on trips
with anyone you do
not love.”

—ERNEST HEMINGWAY





The Knight is young

A suit that doesn't keel over and give in to fatigue? Sir Paul Smith may just be the inspiration behind his latest offering, discovers Shivangi Lolayekar

On the final day of Men's Fashion Week in Paris, the last leg of the menswear calendar that's now been stretched to a little short of a month, I'm ready to plummet into a black hole.

Sir Paul Smith, on the other hand, seems like he's running on full power. The 69-year-old menswear stalwart has just shown his Fall/Winter 2015-16 collection, charging out and hopping along the runway like the Energizer Bunny for his final bow, patiently posing for the paparazzi and waving a

peace sign to a supercilious crowd of top editors and buyers.

The next morning, when he bolts into his office for our interview, he's still got that same energy, and I'm unable to control my astonishment at his constant buoyancy. Just how many cups of coffee have you had, Sir Paul? "I'm blessed with a love of life," he laughs. "The two people that steered it were my father and wife. My father was very charismatic. Even when he passed away at 94, he had lots of young friends. Hopefully I've inherited some of his genes and personality.

TRAVEL SPECIAL

"My wife is very disciplined, always does things correctly and is very well-mannered." As first impressions go, Paul's warm and approachable, someone you'd want to consult for life advice, but also spend Saturday evenings with, drinking chardonnay at a pub. His design discipline? He credits that solely to his wife.

Paul's career trajectory has been colourful, although fashion never crossed his mind until much later – he claims he's always been well-dressed, though. As a teenager out of a tiny British Midland town called Beeston, he was passionate about cycling. And he was successful at it, until an accident at the age of 17 forced him to quit. Soon after, Paul began travelling to London and, by way of a few arty friends, started hanging out with Sixties scenesters like the Rolling Stones, Pink Floyd and Led Zeppelin. But rock gods Mick Jagger, Robert Plant and Roger Waters didn't inspire him as much as one Pauline Denyer (now Mrs Smith), who taught him how to design, and eventually encouraged him to open a boutique. Suits became his strongest selling point, and →

Paul Smith's new all-purpose suit won't let you down





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he nicked the phrase "classic with a twist", which continues to be the catalyst of every collection since.

Paul wakes up at 4:45am every morning, hops into his Mini and goes for a swim, before reaching work at 6am – a time when his 300+ employees are still in bed. The next two hours are spent listening to music while deciding his plan of action for the day, something he's been doing since 1992. "When I started out, it was about having an idea in your head and heart, designing clothes you hoped somebody would like and then forming a relationship with the world. But then, there were far lesser brands, no internet and no fast fashion. Over the years it has grown enormously and now there are more fishermen fishing for the same fish," he says.

In a burgeoning fashion universe, Paul has a clever way of staying on top: "It's important to have a point of view. You can show beautiful clothes but many people are doing that." His newest offering is "A Suit To Travel In", available in three colours and made from innovatively spun merino sheep wool. I push for technicalities, but instead of throwing fashion jargon at me, Paul unexpectedly crouches on the floor, on all fours, and begins rubbing his belly, in a re-enactment of the wool-gathering process. "The wool is pulled from the sheep's stomach because it has the longest fibre and is more resilient." Springing back up, he explains that the suit comes in three fits: "skinny man", "medium" and "bigger man". The suit looks quite ordinary to the naked eye but Paul explains its versatility: "You can wear it with trainers and a chambray shirt or a white shirt and classic brogues."

To me, the appeal of this suit lies in the fact that it refuses to cease, even after you've taken a flight, sat in a meeting and hit a bar – the kind of functional, multi-tasking clothing that every man needs today.

It's because of this kind of forward thinking and astuteness that Paul Smith's considered one of the best menswear designers to come out of Britain. He also happens to be inimitably charming and unorthodox while at it. When everyone's doing leather, Paul brings out a breathable suit. When other designers have Lewis Hamilton and Kate Moss sitting in their front rows, Paul would rather



Paul unexpectedly crouches on the floor, on all fours, and begins rubbing his belly, in a re-enactment of the wool-gathering process

hang out with Daniel Day Lewis in his own home.

When the interview's over, Paul cups my hand, apologizing for making me wait. I ask him when he's coming to India next. "I'll have to check with my wife and that one over there," he gestures to his assistant, Kirsty. "They're scared I'll commit to everything. I'm very childlike and curious, and when you're curious, you tend to say, 'Why can't we do everything?'" ☺



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THE ONLY WAY TO BLAZE

...the zany days of crest-embellished jackets and bow ties have given way to subtler alternatives: navy blazers and pocket squares. They're still preppy, but not in a frat boy kind of way.

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POLO POSITION

You can find them in every colour but what sets a quality polo apart from the cheap stuff is that subtle logo - by which we mean Ralph Lauren's mean Lacoste's croc horse, or Arrow's stag or Abercrombie & Fitch? Wear at your own risk.

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Want to pop that collar?
Unless your neck's on fire, leave it down.



JOG ON

Justin Bieber may have been on to something when he started wearing track pants two years ago, because now the trend's so out there, even designers are cutting luxe versions. Just remember that you're not actually cutting the luxe versions. The Bieber. Ditch the baseball cap and the oversized tee.

POLO BY TOMMY HILFINGER, ₹2,800. TRACK PANTS BY SUPERDRY, ₹6,990. TRAINERS BY TOD'S, ₹32,000



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LAYER UP

Cardigans really are the lynchpins of prepster style. You can pair 'em with khakis or coloured chinos, with printed shirts or polos. And if you really want to nail summer layering, buy them in cotton or jersey.

CARDIGAN BY U.S. POLO ASSN., ₹3,000. SHIRT, ₹3,000, CHINOS, ₹3,000; BOTH BY JACK & JONES. WATCH BY CARL F. BUCHERER, ₹5,60,000. LOAFERS BY TOD'S, ₹33,000



Let your cardigan end at the waist, and leave the first and last two buttons undone.



SHANTANU & NIKHIL

New Delhi | Mumbai | Hyderabad



BOTTOM'S UP

Preppy style may have its roots in New England, but 21st century fashion calls for a shift from Ivy League conservatism to Americana irreverence. The best way to transition? Replace muted pastel pants with bold chinos - and that high-brow attitude with a laid-back vibe.

JACKET BY JACK & JONES, ₹4,000. SHIRT BY GAS, ₹5,990. TIE BY THE BRO F. BUCHERER, ₹4,18,000. BELT BY PAUL & SHARK, ₹12,990. LOAFERS BY TOD'S, ₹33,000

EARN YOUR STRIPES

They're the easiest way to get in on this trend, especially if cardigans or coloured pants are too in-your-face waspy for you.

JUMPER BY ETRO, ₹29,990.
CHINOS BY GAS, ₹5,990.
LOAFERS BY TOD'S, ₹32,000



WILLS LIFESTYLE

The world will race for second place.

CLASSIC
ss.15





EYE SPY

The quirkier the eyewear, the better. And you have everything from tortoise shell and cat eye to acetate frames to help you take the plunge. Just pick a pair that suits your face to avoid looking like Dame Edna.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:
GLASSES BY **EMPORIO ARMANI**, ₹11,000. WAISTCOAT BY **JOHN VARVATOS**, ₹24,360. SHIRT BY **GAS**, ₹4,590. TIE BY **THOMAS PINK**, ₹7,990
GLASSES BY **DOLCE & GABBANA**, ₹23,000. JUMPER BY **JACK & JONES**, ₹1,700
GLASSES BY **PRADA**, ₹18,500. SHIRT BY **BROOKS BROTHERS**, ₹7,990. BOW TIE BY **THE BRO CODE**, ₹2,000
GLASSES BY **EMPORIO ARMANI**, ₹38,500. SHIRT BY **JACK & JONES**, ₹2,500

08.45

On
affair
to
remember



A man with dark hair and a beard is smiling while talking on a black smartphone. He is wearing a dark zip-up jacket over a pink shirt and a purple and white plaid scarf. He is leaning against a black metal railing. In the background, the Eiffel Tower is visible against a clear blue sky.

K

Just surfacing! Can't wait to hit the city. What's the plan for the day? Give me 10 minutes, that's all I need to charge my new Galaxy S6 Edge phone. It'll give me 4 hours of usage, so I can take all the pictures I want.

SMS 08.45

M

See you in half an hour?
Let's start with a café au lait and some croissants.
When in Paris...

SMS 08.47

What is it about Paris that has the world so enthralled? Is it the romance? The indulgent food? The architecture and design? The elegance of the Parisian?

The epicentre of cutting-edge design and age-old craftsmanship, Paris is where chic meets cool. It's been an inspiration to creative minds for centuries. From art and fashion to music and cinema, the city's charm has been well documented in popular culture.

What's been most enduring is the relationship between movie stars and the city's oldest couturiers—Audrey Hepburn and Givenchy; Jane Birkin and Hermès; and Marion Cotillard and Dior—there's no doubt that style and screen merge effortlessly in Paris.

We got actor Kangana Ranaut and leading fashion designer Manish Malhotra to spend 24 action-packed hours in this dynamic city, and capture their memories on the new **Samsung Galaxy S6 Edge**.

08.45



10.30

10.30

People Watching @ a cafe

M: "Great outfit. Let me take a new profile picture."

K: "I love it! I'm sending it to my friends—they are going to be so jealous!"

The Galaxy S6 and S6 Edge pair metal and glass to create a collection of multifaceted phones and accessories for their style-forward users.

The all-new 5.1' QUAD HD Super Amoled Display enhances user experience.



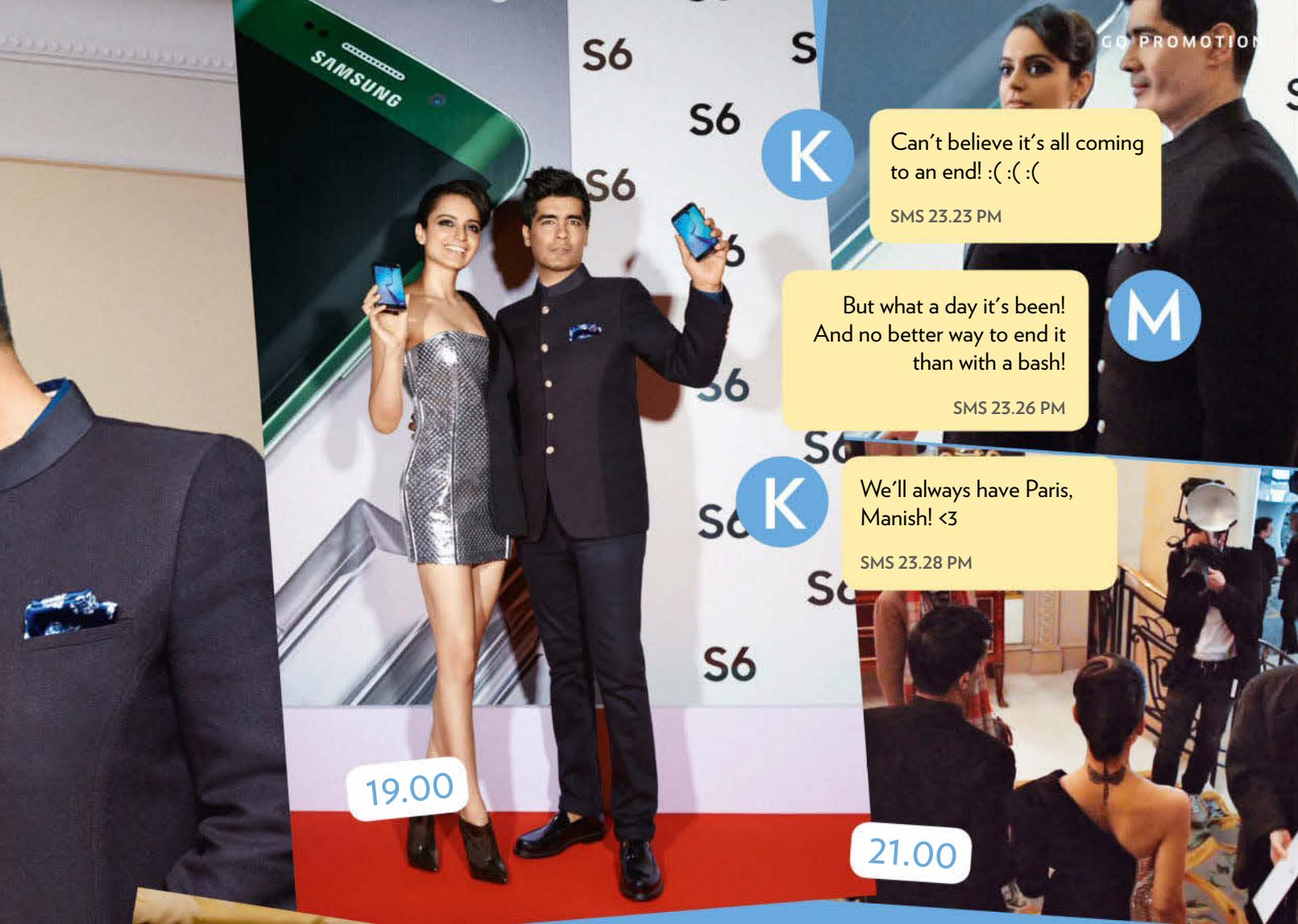
18.15

18.25

Getting ready @ Four Seasons Hotel George V

Red carpet appearances make me nervous but a little party never hurt nobody! My @jpgaultier dress is uber modern and edgy—perfect for tonight—and the curved, borderless and seamless edges of my new **Galaxy S6 Edge** phone make it a great accessory. #24hoursinparis





#24hoursinparis

SAMSUNG Galaxy S6 | S6 edge

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MUC



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1. SUNGLASSES BY **MARC JACOBS**, ₹18,400
2. TRAVEL POUCH BY **DA MILANO**, ₹3,500
3. LUGGAGE BY **SAMSONITE**, ₹11,800
4. iPAD STAND/NOTEBOOK CASE BY **BROOKS BROTHERS**, ₹21,100
5. WATCH BY **SWATCH**, ₹9,900
6. PASSPORT COVER BY **TUMI**, ₹8,000
7. MONOGRAM MADRAS BLANKET BY **LOUIS VUITTON**, PRICE ON REQUEST
8. iPHONE/IPOD TOUCH CASE BY **GUCCI**, PRICE ON REQUEST
9. DOPP KIT BY **NAPPA DORI**, ₹3,600
10. FRAGRANCE BY **ISSEY MIYAKE**, ₹8,500

**TRAVEL
SPECIAL**

1. DUFFLE BAG BY **EMPORIO ARMANI**, PRICE ON REQUEST
 2. WATCH BY **MONTBLANC**, PRICE ON REQUEST
 3. SUNGLASSES BY **HUGO BOSS**, ₹13,900
 4. FRAGRANCE BY **ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA**, ₹12,110
 5. MONEY BY **MARTIN AMIS**, ₹400
 6. CARD HOLDER BY **RICHARD JAMES**, ₹10,210
 7. KEYCHAIN BY **SALVATORE FERRAGAMO**, ₹19,000
 8. HAT BY **PAUL SMITH**, ₹6,270
 9. SLING BAG BY **CALVIN KLEIN**, ₹7,000
 10. DUFFLE BAG BY **BOTTEGA VENETA**, ₹2,32,000





S A B Y A S A C H I

sabyasachi.com



STAND TALL

Louis Vuitton sneakers may come alive on the Champs-Élysées or Hollywood Boulevard, but they're actually born in a sleepy little Italian town called Fiesso D'Artico, finds **Shivangi Lolayekar**

Venice is like eating an entire box of chocolate liqueurs in one go," Truman Capote said of Italy's famous port city. By that notion, it's the lesser known village of Fiesso d'Artico you'd stagger into to scupper recoveries. Fiesso was once the go-to retreat for local nobility to escape Venice's stifling summer heat. Today, it boasts of abundant art galleries – and a noteworthy shoe factory designed by architect Jean-Marc Sandrolini.

At first impressions go, the structure's sky-high slabbed walls and steel fittings make for a brutal façade. But step in, and the sun's rays dance around the grand lobby (on a good day); Warhol books and Yayoi Kusama artwork line the corridors; and you'll spot paduka prototypes that you can imagine Gandhi wore when he wasn't barefoot. In the inner patio, a monumental shoe sculpture made out of 600 saucepans by Joana Vasconcelos hits you in the face. Why would a shoe factory have high-end art and giant installations? When it's French powerhouse Louis Vuitton's shoe factory, nothing is done in small measures.

Still, the most impressive part isn't Sandrolini's mammoth structure (which resembles a shoe box), or Warhol's original drawings casually hanging on the walls. It is the level of thoroughness that goes into creating each pair of footwear here – an average of 150-200 operations on every model. From every handmade stitch joining the sole to the upper on a pair of sneakers, to the painstaking precision with which the →





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MADE TO ORDER

From the edible buttery leather on a monkstrap to sneakers that refuse to wear out, you're not just getting footwear. You're getting a story

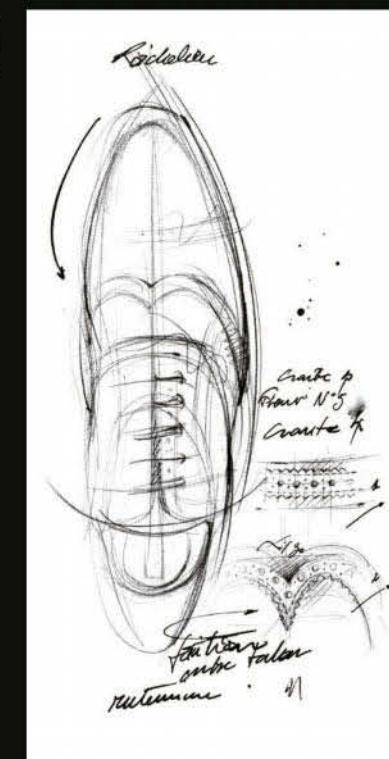
patina is applied to a leather brogue, quality is of the utmost importance.

There's even a special laboratory – a destruction chamber, rather. The effects of thousands of steps are replicated to see how a leather holds up to wear. A sole undergoes serious bashing to check for durability. An oven tests the resilience of a shoe against extreme climates. One fault – even as tiny as an unintended stain or scratch – and the shoe is trashed.

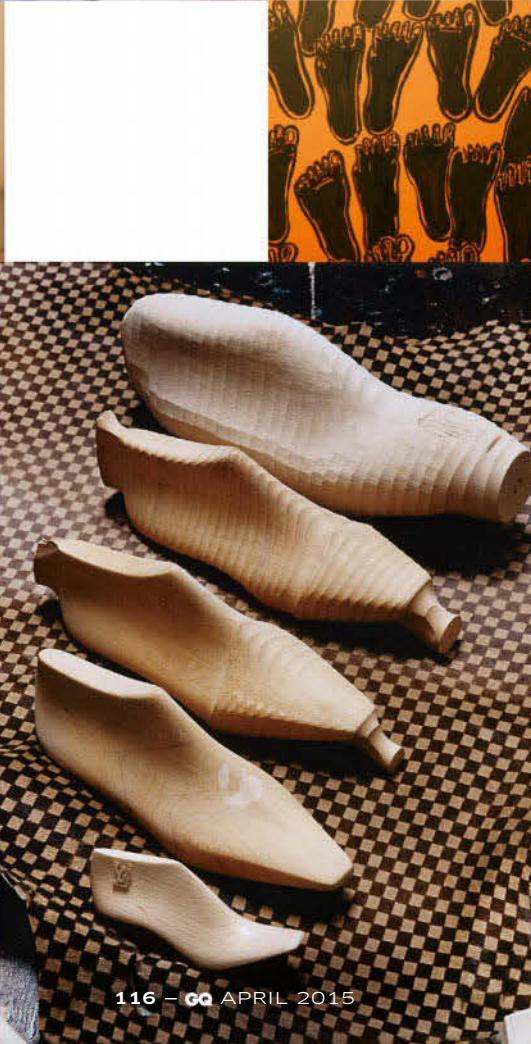
The process is overwhelming when you watch LV's elves at work, especially since shoes aren't the first product you think of with this brand – Louis Vuitton's renowned for its luggage. But since shoes were first introduced into its portfolio in 1998, their popularity's been rising steadily, and Fiesso lies at the heart of it.

It's strange that a feted Parisian brand would have its shoe biz down south, in Italy. Yet Fiesso has always enjoyed a reputation as the "land of shoes", stemming from generations of skilled craftsmen. You're likely to find a father-son duo working in the factories dotting the landscape, possibly even the son's son.

That's where the success of Louis Vuitton lies: heritage is seamlessly married to quality here and the product always comes out as the ultimate king. From the edible buttery leather on a monkstrap to sneakers that refuse to wear out, you're not just getting footwear. You're getting a story, and something that will last you long enough to pass down to your grandkids. If you can manage to let go of it in the first place. ☺



Go that extra mile and invest in Louis Vuitton's Made To Order service. Why? Because you can choose from six shoe models and the most exotic leathers. And, with optional hot-stamped initials, everyone will know you're a real don (everyone who sees the insides of your shoes, anyway).



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Akmal Shaukat

This British art director moonlights as a model – and looks on point while he's at it

Describe your personal style.
Contemporary, unusual and daring.

Which are your favourite brands?

Tom Ford, for his luxurious take on old Hollywood glamour with dapper suits and decorative smoking robes. Ashish, because he seamlessly mixes western and eastern influences. And Versace, for when I'm out on the prowl in Miami.

How has menswear evolved in the UK?

London's always been home to Teddy Boys, dandies and Savile Row tailoring. But fashion has really picked up here thanks to London Collections: Men, which offers a comprehensive representation of menswear with fresh ideas.

What should every man have in his wardrobe?

A perfectly tailored tuxedo and decent hangers (arguably the most essential item for any man's wardrobe).

Which are your favourite stylish hotspots?

There are so many in London. The Chiltern Firehouse is one of my current favourites – it has an attractive old New York art deco ambience with a rustic vibe.

Which cities inspire you?

Most of the cities that I have travelled to have been inspirational, and my work reflects that. My home town of Bradford also holds a very special place – I recently even had "Made In Bradford" tattooed on my body.

What interesting purchases have you made recently?

I like collecting antiques. Recent finds were an 1860s French Burr Walnut Games Compendium Box, and a vintage sheepskin coat with a mink collar from Portobello Road in Notting Hill.

How do you normally kick back?

With a Jameson on the rocks and a good read – which is currently Anne Rice's *The Vampire Chronicles*.



What are you wearing?

COAT BY TOPMAN.
JACKET BY GUCCI AT MR. PORTER.
TROUSERS BY VALENTINO AT MATCHESFASHION.
SHOES BY POSTE.
RINGS BY CARTIER



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Style Shrink

GQ's style guru **Vijendra Bhardwaj** addresses your sartorial dilemmas. This month, how to pack light and travel high



Peter O'Toole & Charlotte Rampling in *The Far Side Of Paradise* (1975)

Q.2 PACK A PUNCH

I'm carrying some of my suits on my holiday to Rome next month. How do I pack them properly?

—Sanjay, Delhi

The structure of a tailored suit jacket comes from delicate interlinings, fusions and shoulder pads. And that's really the

stuff you have to protect. I suggest carrying yours in a dedicated jacket compartment – like this one from Tumi.

Or, opt for Paul Smith's travelling suit, which launches in September and comes in black, navy and grey, and refuses to crease or crumple. If you do decide to pack your suit with your other clothes, make sure it sits on top.



Tumi

Q1

TIP OFF

What kind of hats are beach-appropriate?

—Abi, Bengaluru

The right kind conveys flair, and will get you noticed. In fact, Johnny Depp, Peter O'Toole, Humphrey Bogart and Frank Sinatra are all known for their distinct choices. Since you specify beach, opt for straw hats. I'm personally drawn to slightly bigger styles, like the Panama, but also consider the small-brimmed trilby, endorsed by Justin Timberlake and Pete Doherty.

THE LOOK: Get a moderate brim (not too wide), a neutral band (to go with everything you wear) and the right size.

HOW TO WEAR: I'm with Sinatra, who said "Angles are attitudes", and like to tilt it a bit. For a casual look, wear your hat centrally on the crown of your head.

WHERE TO BUY: I'd recommend a fine Borsalino fedora when you're travelling. Else, head to Hermès for a chic trilby or Burberry for some bright, floppy bucket styles.



Even Wolverine needs guns

Q.3 WORK IT

I don't want to give up my gym routine while I'm in New York for the summer. Is there anything like dressing right for the gym?

—Denzel, Mumbai

Denzel, there's a look for every place, and the gym is no exception. Here's the low-down on how to work out, in style:

TOP

Never wear what you wore the day before. Invest in some sports tees, vests and a cool bomber (for when you arrive at and leave the gym).

BOTTOM

Track pants and shorts are fine. As for the hot pants, leave them out – you don't want to show your nuts.

FEET

Invest in good trainers – adidas, Puma and Nike have the best utility pairs. Also, always wear fresh socks.

ACCESSORIES

You're not in college – so no college rucksack. And you're not shopping. So no shopping bag. Get a functional and stylish duffle. ☺

Send your sartorial queries to styleshrink@gqindia.com

SUMMER LOVIN' LINEN

The heat is on, and linen makes a fashionable appearance this summer with Celio's Spring/Summer 2015 collection

Where comfort meets cool, the trendiest fabric of the season is here in a breezy, fresh and summery avatar. Whether it's for work or weekend chilling, linen separates are the epitome of contemporary summer elegance. So, guys, it's time to elevate your warm-weather style with Celio's dapper collection of 100 per cent premium linen full- and half-sleeved shirts, relaxed trousers and trendy bermudas.

It's all about the details – from the contrasting inner lining on the sleeve to the slit-pocket detail, the contrasting piping on the cuff to a myriad of offsetting colours on the button linings and inner collars. These subtle touches help create standout statements. At the core of the collection are shirts in a palette of solid colours like navy, maroon, sky blue and white, making these shirts everyday staples – easy to wear and pair! Pick between regular collars or Mandarin collars. And don't be afraid of a few wrinkles – they're what give linen its attitudinal appeal.

Then there's the linen shirts, which exude an undeniable sexy nautical flair. From anchor micro prints to marine pinstripes and thick sailor stripes, all bring the easy-going Mediterranean style to mind. Moving away from the solids, the collection also has a bevy of checks: classic ginghams, Madras or plaid-inspired, in a variety of bold colours. The microcheck is also making its presence felt – they're so small, they're almost a secret!

Mix modern linen into your look this summer with Celio!



STYLE FOR MEN BY

celio*
PARIS | MILAN | BARCELONA



1 NEW DIRECTION

Bikes, planes and the Queen's crown - **Pepe Jeans London** has really cranked up its T-shirt game. The loud prints may not be for everyone, but wear a jacket over one and you'll make the right statement.

pepejeans.com

5 HOT RIGHT NOW

WHAT? Clarks' sexy blue suede shoes that Elvis would wear.

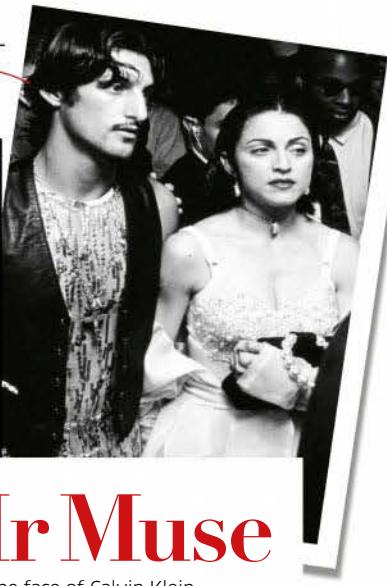
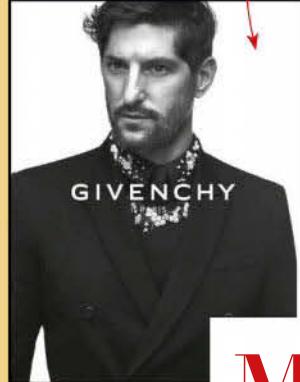
WHY? They're exactly what you need to get in on summer's big colour movement. And, they'll take you through the next couple of seasons.

clarks.com

WORLD TRIPPING

Baume & Mercier's Capeland Manufacture Worldtimer tells you, in one glance, the time in 24 cities mapped on the dial. For the serial jetsetter, it scores way over a dual-timezone watch any day.

baume-et-mercier.com



2 Mr Muse

THEN: The face of Calvin Klein underwear, and Madonna's boy toy, who appeared in her 1992 book *SEX*.
NOW: Tony Ward, supermodel and actor, is fronting **Givenchy's** S/S '15 campaign. givenchy.com

The List

TOP PICKS FROM GQ'S STYLE DESK



4. Time travel

Advertisements often tend to be marketing propaganda. Luckily, the coffee table crusher *20th Century Travel: 100 Years Of Globe-Trotting Ads* isn't gimmicky. The lavishly illustrated book shows the evolution of transport and travel trends, interspersed with short essays. A refreshing reminder of how flying was once a privilege.

Available on
amazon.in

3 VESTED INTEREST

We don't promote vests as an acceptable sartorial choice - not for work, the bar or a gig (heads up, EDM guys). The beach is the only place to wear one - if you take care of your grooming first.

GQ recommends: **Koovs'** paint-splattered version, paired with white board shorts and espadrilles. Layer up with a denim shirt. koovs.com



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THE HOMELAND'S HOTTEST EXPORT

WRITTEN BY **DAVE BESSELING** STYLED BY **VIJENDRA BHARDWAJ** PHOTOGRAPHED BY **R BURMAN**

She's the girl
who took India's
indie cred
worldwide with
The Lunchbox,
the spy you
loved to hate
on the hit
TV show
Homeland, and
now **NIMRAT
KAUR** is back
on native soil,
under the radar,
infiltrating
big-budget
Bollywood

Nimrat Kaur isn't your average bauble-eyed pinup girl. Her allure is something more elusive, more amorphous, more mature than that. It's like the gods have entrusted her with a secret but the closest you're going to get to it is reading twinkles in the limpid pools of her eyes.

There's her sultry, steely, I-spy-the-ISI stare from the latest season of *Homeland*, but there's also a sweetness, ready to breach the lovely, lovely ducts of a despondent Mumbai housewife in the BAFTA-nominated sleeper-smash *The Lunchbox*.

This is a woman who's played both ends of the fantasy spectrum in not much more than a year, to near-universal acclaim, and you may not've even heard of her yet.

And here she is now, smoothing a few errant strands of hair from her face on this windy 9th-floor hotel terrace in Colaba. Her newly elevated status is discernible in the physics of her high heels, but she's flowing a one-piece dress patterned more like *Little House On The Prairie* than La Croisette red carpet, a baggy brown purse bouncing off her hip, hair not unkempt but *au naturel*. Once within greeting range, I catch sight of a scrawl on the outside of her left wrist.

"What's that tattoo?" I ask.

"It says 'Zainab'."

"Oh right. What's the meaning of that again?"

"It has many, but I got it for 'father's precious jewel', or 'daughter that brings glory to the father's name'. It's for my dad. I lost him when I was very young and as I get older I miss him more and more. I don't want to sound melodramatic, but it's just..."

"No, it's fine," I say, "melodrama's just not how I thought this would begin."

"How do you know this isn't exactly the way it should have started?" she counters. →



DRESS BY VIVIENNE
WESTWOOD. BELT, WHIP,
CUFF; ALL BY HERMÈS

A

After setting herself up in Mumbai at age 23, Nimrat put in the years where success was defined mostly by Juhu's Prithvi Theatre supplemented with advertising gigs. If you do know her, you might recognize her as the Cadbury girl who likes eating chocolate at traffic signals. But when director Ritesh Batra saw Nimrat in the rushes for an unreleased but Cannes-screened *Peddlers*, he'd assure her second role would return her to the Riviera, where *The Lunchbox* took the Critic's Week Viewer's Choice award in 2013. And that's when Karan Johar and UTV got on board.

"I was just a working actor," Nimrat explains, almost defensively, "there in my corner, doing my ads, doing my plays, and then life as I knew it was over."

An expression somewhere between amusement and bewilderment crosses the 33-year-old's face. "It makes you wonder if you were always walking towards this, you know what I'm saying?"

I do. "You mean you think this is all sort of predestined?"

She takes a few seconds to think. "Going through what I did as a child, I chose to think this way, otherwise things would have become too cynical... You just have to take care of your surroundings the best you can. My father was a living example of that."

As we'll discover while chatting on the phone a few days later, it turns out I knew about Nimrat's father long before I met her.

I remember it clearly, a few years ago, having jumped out the back of a Tata Sumo to show my passport to the soldiers guarding the Jawahar Tunnel, the east-west birth canal of the Kashmir Valley. It wasn't your usual road sign, your punny admonishment of "Speed Thrills But Kills" or "Be Gentle On My Curves", but a tribute to Major Bhupender Singh, posthumous recipient of the Shaurya Chakra award, who had "maintained National Highway and Jawahar Tunnel from 09 May 1993 to 17 Jan 1994. He achieved martyrdom when anti-national elements captured him and shot him on 17 Jan 1994".

But "they got the dates wrong," Nimrat tells me. "My father was abducted on January 17 and lost his life on January 23, 1994." →





TROUSERS,
SLEEVELESS
BLAZER; BOTH BY
ROHIT GANDHI +
RAHUL KHANNA.
BRA BY **NICOLE DE**
KARL. WATCH BY
HERMÈS

OPPOSITE PAGE:
DRESS BY **ATSUKO**
KUDO. SHOES BY
GIUSEPPE ZANOTTI





“I CAME BACK
FROM CANNES,
AND I COULD
SEE THIS WAVE
BUILDING UP”

DRESS BY GAURAV
GUPTA. SHOES BY
GIUSEPPE ZANOTTI

“IT'S LOVE/HATE WITH KASHMIR, FOR HOW BEAUTIFUL IT IS AND WHAT IT TOOK AWAY FROM MY FAMILY”

The first flight she ever took was the next day, January 24, from Srinagar to Delhi, with her mom by her side and her dad in a coffin. Nimrat's mother, Avinash, was presented her husband's Shaurya Chakra at Rashtrapati Bhavan on March 13, Nimrat's 12th birthday. No children were allowed at the ceremony, but the medal now resides at Nimrat's apartment in Santacruz.

“It's in the cabinet beside my bed,” she says.

Nimrat spent the decade from 12 to 22 with her mother, just outside the capital in Noida, Sector 29, a place where Iron Curtain tower blocks would be embarrassed at the lack of accoutrement. It's a dullness that may contribute to Nimrat saying she was always interested in “being noticed”, always being the first to have her hand up in class. “I just enjoyed generating reactions,” she says, “but looking back, I never want to relive my childhood.”

She turns to look out over Colaba's ochre skyline begging for monsoon fumigation, perhaps thinking back to the starrier skies above the cherry tree near her last family house in Verinag, 80 kilometres south of Srinagar, where she “would spend hours” dreaming about whatever 11-year-olds dream about before their dads are murdered and they have to suffer their formative years in Noida.

rowing up, she explains, “films were only seen as entertainment, it was a task for me to come to terms with myself, let alone admit to my mom that I wanted to be an actress and come to Bombay, this dark dungeon that no one comes out of.”

Planned or unplanned, predestination or chance, once *The Lunchbox* sold at Cannes, this *dabba* would prove to be her meal ticket.

“I came back from France that May,” she recalls, “and suddenly, everywhere I'd go, I'd be overwhelmed with attention, I could see this wave building up, and I really wished my dad was around to see what was happening.”

So in June 2013, as anyone with a decently tuned inner radar would, after being feted at the most famous film festival in the world and having Irrfan Khan supply career-coaching under Mediterranean palm trees, she went on a pilgrimage – “back to the house where we lived, talked to people that had worked with my father, went trekking alone a lot.”

Nimrat will later send me photos of that cherry tree, her posing with the locals who ran the Verinag house – a glowing returnee in a salwaar and dark shades, wrapped in a kurta-swept Kashmiri group hug. “It was great closure,” she says. “but it's a real love/hate relationship with [Kashmir], for how beautiful it is and what it took away from my family... After I came back to Bombay, I got the Zainab tattoo on my wrist.”

So then. Mentally and spiritually fortified, having come to terms with her father being kidnapped, shot and left on a roadside by members of Harkat-ul-Ansar, a Pakistani separatist group that would go on to abduct five British nationals and one American, what sort of chance, what kind of fate, would earn her those worldwide acting stripes by playing a scheming secret agent in Pakistan's ISI – the intelligence agency that helped establish Harkat-al-Ansar in 1993?

“Actually,” before being cast in London, “I'd never even seen the show,” she says. So she binge-watched the first three seasons and reported to Cape Town, the city that would, oddly enough, double for Islamabad. “They tried to shoot in India but ran into the bureaucracy, permission issues and stuff like that. Big surprise.”

She speaks of being on an American-budget shoot like it's a military operation. The strategy of coordinating all the different scenes and locations, new writers and directors coming and going and no significant pre-scene rehearsals. You just have to be that professional on the day. And it all moved so fast there wasn't much time in the schedule to reflect or see a bigger picture. Aside from a cast screening of the first episode – reception selfie with Claire Danes, *check* – she hasn't slowed down enough to relive her season of the show. She instead brought this international experience back to Mumbai, ploughed through 25 scripts and settled on playing the leading lady in a contempo-period piece set in Kuwait called *Airlift*, an, uhh, an Akshay Kumar pop vehicle.

“With all the credibility you've got now, don't you worry people might see this movie as a bit of a sell-out?”

“What are you talking about?” she crows, eyebrows almost hitting that double widow's peak she has, follicular genetics that would probably have made her an oracle in certain ancient cultures. “I've just spent a week with a man whose films I've grown up watching. How freaking cool is that?” ☺



DRESS BY **GAURAV GUPTA**. SHOES BY **GIUSEPPE ZANOTTI**

HAIR & MAKE-UP: DEEPA VERMA
ASSISTANT STYLIST: TANYA VOHRA
PRODUCTION: VASUNDHARA SHARMA
LOCATION: ITC MARATHA, MUMBAI

THE ITALIAN AFFAIR WITH PERONI!

The Italians know how to live the good life. Art, food, fashion, Peroni... The list is endless. The super-premium Italian beer brand recently hosted its exclusive Aperitivo evening for the dapper and stylish at the ITC Maurya, New Delhi.

Co-hosted by Shalini Kochhar, Peroni brought the age-old culture of Aperitivo to the city, a culture that began in Italy in the late 17th century that was popularized by Italians as an occasion to bring friends together to relax and socialise after a busy day of work. The evening also celebrated renowned Italian painter and sculptor Shola Carletti and her talented portfolio of work. The art installation complemented an evening to relax and socialise.

Guests like Lorenzo Angeloni, Martino Castellani, Sara Ferro, Allesandra Bertini and Ashish Bhasin amongst others enjoyed sharing Peroni and intriguing stories, as they savoured delectable Italian Aperitivo dishes prepared with the freshest ingredients in interesting combinations, showcasing the unique Italian flavour in all its glory. Bon appétit indeed!



GQ WATCH



EDITED BY VARUN GODINHO

- Your exclusive access to the world's most luxe watch exhibition
- Dev Patel knows how to dress his wrist

ROGER DUBUIS

Roger Dubuis always shocks with its extravagant booth setup. This year's theme: skeletonized movements



ABOUT TIME

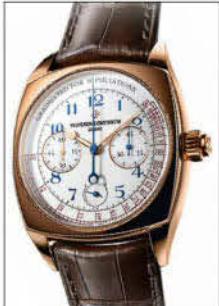
The party never stops at the most prestigious - and exclusive - watch fair in the world. **Varun Godinho** picks the top moments and the most striking timepieces from the 2015 **Salon International de la Haute Horlogerie** in Geneva



MONTBLANC

No, this isn't an alien invasion. The brand's installation is a magnified version - 220 times the original - of the tourbillon on its newest worldtimer: the Montblanc Villeret Tourbillon Cylindrique Geosphères Vasco da Gama.

THE BIRTHDAY BOYS



VACHERON CONSTANTIN

260 years in the watch biz earns you a place among the holy trinity of Swiss watchmakers. And Vacheron Constantin's new Harmony collection is a fitting tribute to its pedigree. The standout watch is the **Ultra-Thin Grande Complication Chronograph**, with an unusual cushion-shaped platinum case inspired by one of its timepieces from 1928. It's also got a 5.2mm movement so skinny it's the world's thinnest self-winding monopusher split-seconds chronograph.



IWC PORTUGIESER

In the late Thirties, two wealthy Portuguese businessmen walked into the IWC manufacture in Schaffhausen and asked the watchmaker to build them a timepiece that was as precise as a marine chronometer clock, but small enough to carry on their person. IWC obliged and in 1939 manufactured a pocketwatch that it named after the Iberian sea-faring nation. This year's special **Portugieser Hand-Wound Eight Days Edition "75th Anniversary"** is a faithful interpretation of that timepiece.

25 Years

The first SIHH took place at Geneva's sprawling Palexpo in 1991, when five luxury watch brands decided BaselWorld (the world's biggest watch fair) had become too crowded for them. The result: this posh, invite-only trade exhibition, attended by top retailers, journalists and the brands' favourite customers. Now, 25 years in, this event has grown exponentially: the collective value of the watches shown here today could well balance the debt of a small European nation.

PARTICIPATING BRANDS

16

EXHIBITION SPACE

40,000

SQUARE METRES

GUESTS INVITED

14,500

JOURNALISTS

1,200

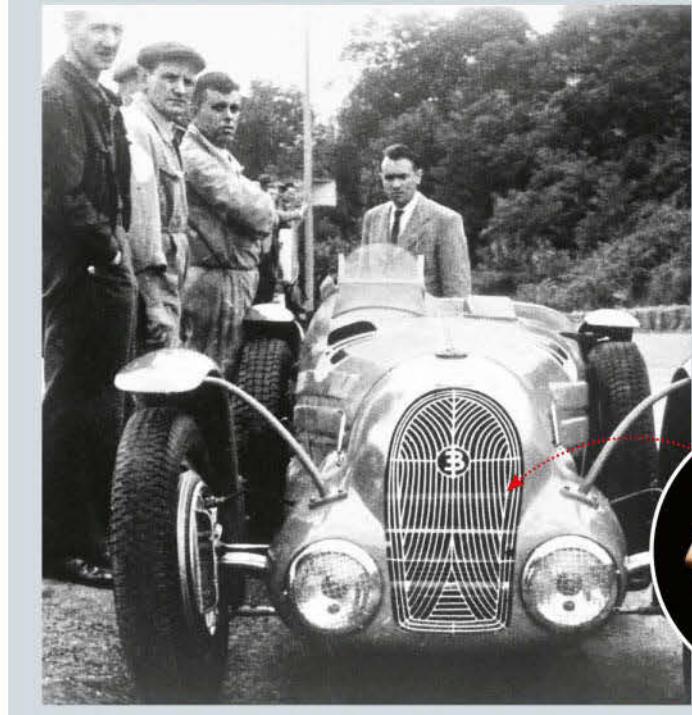
BEST PAVILIONS



BAUME ET MERCIER

It was all about relaxed and affordable luxury at B&M. The living room setting featured photos of several important family moments captured by Peter Lindbergh, from graduation to wedding day - and in each, people were being gifted their first Swiss mechanical wristwatch.

PARMIGIANI FLEURIER X BUGATTI



To celebrate the tenth anniversary of their partnership (the watch brand will also soon retail out of the Bugatti factory in Molsheim, France), PF released a set of three timepieces, each with a vertically arranged movement and strong references to Bugatti's vintage cars. The set costs \$1.1 million. No small change even for someone in the market for a \$2.5 million sports car.

Parmigiani Fleurier Mythe

Invention Race 1 for GQ

THE WATCH INDUSTRY'S MAJORDOMOS (AND WHAT THEY WERE WEARING)



STEPHEN FORSEY

WHO: One half of high-end watchmaking powerhouse Greubel Forsey, which is known for timepieces like the Art Piece 1, with a nano sculpture as thick as a strand of hair.

ON HIS WRIST: Greubel Forsey Quantième Perpétuel à Équation (right wrist); Greubel Forsey concept watch (left wrist)



WALTER LANGE

WHO: The 90-year-old great-grandson of Ferdinand Adolph Lange, who resurrected the family business in 1990, 45 years after it was bombed on the last day of World War II.

ON HIS WRIST: A. Lange & Söhne Langematik



THE HIGH ROLLERS

GREUBEL FORSEY QUANTIÈME PERPÉTUEL À ÉQUATION

PRICE: \$724,000

This watch is nothing short of a mechanical computer. It tells the seasons, equinoxes, solstices, equation of time (the difference between the solar and actual time), day, date, month and year – perpetually. Or, at least until 10,000 AD. So its price tag needn't come as a surprise: The "cheapest" GF timepiece costs \$330,000. And the Perpétuel's so "limited edition" that the brand hasn't even decided how many to make. Given that it's produced only 90 watches since setting up shop 10 years ago, best to sign up for one of these beauties early.



CARTIER ROTONDE DE CARTIER GRANDE COMPLICATION

PRICE: \$590,000

This is Cartier's most complex movement ever, with 578 parts and a badass skeletonized dial. Fifty pieces will be made in platinum, with an additional ten encrusted with diamonds. Exactly how complicated is the watch? It comes with a tourbillon, a perpetual calendar and a minute repeater.

SOUND APPEAL

A. LANGE & SÖHNE ZEITWERK MINUTE REPEATER

There are very few decimal minute repeaters (which chime the hour, ten-minute intervals and minutes) in production worldwide. This is the first we've seen with the gongs brought above the dial. A treat for the eyes and ears.

NEVER STAND STILL



AUDEMARS PIGUET ROYAL OAK ACOUSTIC CONCEPT RD#1

It's a concept that's been eight years in the making: The independent watchmaker collaborated with the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, an institute that specializes in acoustics, to obtain a pitch-perfect timbre on this minute repeater. With an added tourbillon, the watch also keeps perfect time.



BEST-DRESSED WATCHES



PIAGET BLACK TIE VINTAGE WATCH

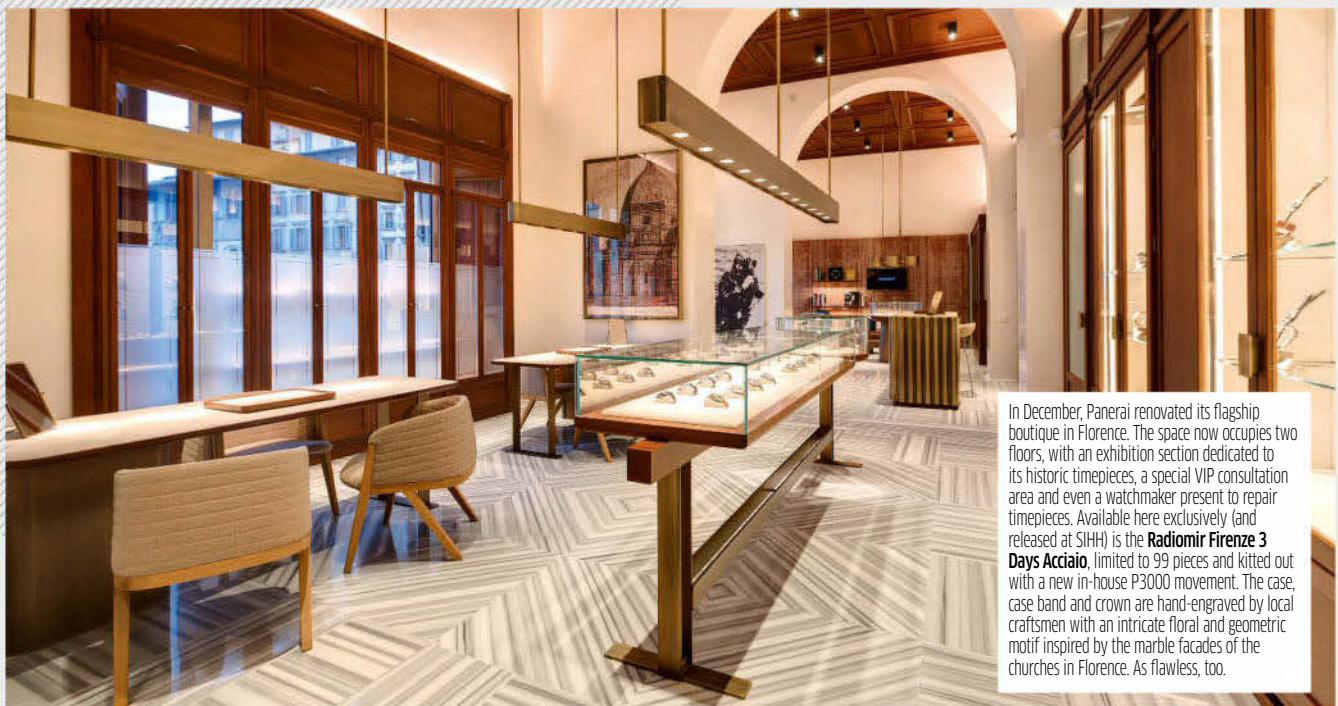
Trust Andy Warhol to be one of the early adopters of the original Black Tie watch, whose case was neither round nor square. The re-imagined 2015 version features a similar onyx hard stone dial, and is slimmer, thanks to a more compact automatic movement. It also comes in a white gold case to create a stark contrast with the dial.



PEOPLE
WATCHING

(Top) Nico Rosberg and Lewis Hamilton with IWC CEO Georges Kern; (Left) supermodels Adriana Lima and Karolína Kurková up the glam quotient

PANERAI'S NEW FLORENCE BOUTIQUE



In December, Panerai renovated its flagship boutique in Florence. The space now occupies two floors, with an exhibition section dedicated to its historic timepieces, a special VIP consultation area and even a watchmaker present to repair timepieces. Available here exclusively (and released at SIHH) is the **Radiomir Firenze 3 Days Acciaio**, limited to 99 pieces and kitted out with a new in-house P3000 movement. The case, case band and crown are hand-engraved by local craftsmen with an intricate floral and geometric motif inspired by the marble facades of the churches in Florence. As flawless, too.

PUSHING BOUNDARIES



PIAGET

What does a watchmaker that holds the record for the world's thinnest mechanical timepiece do next? It adds a complication to it – and then slims it down further. This year's **Altiplano Chronograph** is the world's thinnest manual winding flyback chrono. At 8.24mm, it's a smidgen thicker than a bar of Lindt chocolate. Sweet.



JAEGER-LECOULTRE

JLC's latest timepiece, the **Duomètre Sphérotourbillon Moon**, is a nod to astronomy. The tourbillon's tilted 20 degrees (the angle at which the earth tilts towards the North Star) and there's also the requisite moonphase, visible on the dial, that's accurate to 3,887 years. We'll take the brand's word on that.



140 YEARS
OF FINE AMERICAN
CRAFTSMANSHIP
IN EVERY TICK.
NOW YOURS
IN A CLICK.



BULOVA

Exclusively on

amazon.in

The newsmaker

Dev Patel's on-screen mojo is box-office certified. GQ talks to the 24-year-old actor who plays the consummate underdog – and always comes out on top

He skipped the quicksand-filled quagmire that stretches from working actor to movie star with a debut film that won eight Academy Awards and netted \$377 million. But what's really kept the *Slumdog Millionaire* star in the spotlight is his role in the Aaron Sorkin HBO television drama *The Newsroom*.

This year, the 24-year-old is back on the big screen with a string of releases in which he co-stars with Hollywood's high-rollers, including Hugh Jackman, Nicole Kidman, Judi Dench and Richard Gere. GQ caught up with the actor at SIHH to talk Steven Spielberg, models and luxury watches.

In *The Newsroom*, you played a tech-savvy journalist. We hear that in real life you're quite the opposite.

I'm a bit of a technophobe. I'm still rocking the BlackBerry – a very old non-touchscreen BlackBerry, actually. That's one of my requirements, no touchscreens, because I'm hyperactive and tend to butt dial and wrong dial. I stick to emailing, texting and calling.

How hot was your co-star Olivia Munn?

Olivia's got that very head-turning quality. You could smell her when she's on set. She's beautifully perfumed. She's that kind of rock 'n' roll, no-bullshit kind of female character which I think is quite cool.

And Emily Mortimer?

Join the queue, man! Just stunning. I mean, Emily's not only physically very beautiful, her personality is so radiant. She's funny, self-deprecating and incredibly talented.

Which watches did you wear on the show?

It must have been some non-existent brands or one of those Casios with loads of buttons on it. Neal's [Patel's character] big thing though were his cardigans. Our costume designer was inundated with callers asking, "What cardigan

was he wearing in this episode?" It became a thing to put me in these different cardigans.

What was your first luxury wristwatch?

I've worn a lot of watches, but the first was a Rolex my grandfather gave me. It's somewhere in London right now.

The one thing your watch knows about you that no one else does.

How bad I am at keeping time! Let's just say I've never betrayed someone as much as my watch. The one thing it doesn't know about me is how hard I've been working out recently. I don't wear it to the gym.

Which is your favourite timepiece from your personal collection?

This one right here [points to the IWC Portugieser Automatic in stainless steel on his wrist]. I'm saving up for the rose-gold



version. It's nice to have something to work up to. I want to earn what I'm wearing. You don't want the watch to wear you, otherwise it just feels like someone strapped it on you. For me, it's like, let me make some more movies, feel good about myself and go to the right event with that beautiful rose-gold watch, wearing the right suit, and feel like a million bucks.

Charlie Hebdo. What perspective did your role as a journalist in *The Newsroom* give you on the subject?

What you're dealing with here is freedom of speech. From *The Newsroom* I learned about the power of newsreaders. For instance Will McAvoy [Jeff Daniels], the lead character, has got this great responsibility of trying to report the right news and feed the audience their vegetables, but at the same time he's got this pressure of trying to keep an audience, and the only way is to be slightly sensational. We really need to ask ourselves if we are becoming too vacuous.

To the critics who say that you predominantly play the geeky Indian techie stereotype, you say...

Watch my next film. Maybe I have played the geeky character before, but my aim is to sometimes break the mould within the mould. In *The Newsroom* my character isn't just a geek; he's quite the casanova too. I think it's very hypocritical to say I'm never going to play a certain role. Spielberg's not going to call you just like that. You've got to earn your stripes, and by that I mean you've got to work. Also, you can't run before you walk. Take the African-American actors for instance. Their struggles are far more evolved than Indian actors. There's Sidney Poitier, Will Smith, Denzel Washington and so many more in Hollywood. Now if you step away from Bollywood, which is a very secluded industry, and come to America and look at the people representing us there, you could count those doing quality work on one hand. It's tough trying to fly the flag.

What are you up to this year?

I have two films, *Chappie* and *The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*, that premier on the same day in the US. In between promoting these films, I'm also shooting with Nicole Kidman, who plays my mother in a film based on a true story. So it's a very busy couple of months ahead for me. ☺



clarks.in

Life styled by **Clarks.**

Delhi/NCR | Mumbai | Bangalore | Pune | Chennai | Jaipur | Hyderabad | Chandigarh | Ludhiana | Kanpur | Kochi | Rajkot | Mohali | Thane
Coimbatore | Kolkata | Siliguri | Surat | Vadodara | Dehradun | Guwahati | Amritsar | Lucknow | Udaipur | Sriganganagar | Raipur



2012
WINNER
ANEETH ARORA



2015
THIS
COULD BE
YOU

VOGUE INDIA FASHION FUND

YOU COULD BE FASHION'S NEXT BIG THING

The Vogue India Fashion Fund in association with the Fashion Design Council of India (FDCI) is back in its fourth innings, and the chance to win this year's coveted prize could be yours! For the last three years, Vogue has been reaching out to the best design talent in India and has remained committed to steering them to newer heights.

WHAT'S NEW

This year we are also recognizing accessory designers who curate jewellery and bags

ELIGIBILITY

You have a degree or diploma in fashion/design from a recognized institute

Your collection has retailed in India for a minimum of 2 years and a maximum of 8 years

You have participated in a solo/joint/group fashion show in at least one fashion week

You have received editorial or press coverage

You employ a team of professional staff/
You have a production facility

YOU COULD WIN

A cash prize

Yearlong business/creative/marketing mentorship with an industry professional

Access to prominent platforms in the industry

Mentorship from Vogue

A fashion shoot in Vogue India

PR support and media coverage

Register at Vogueindiafashionfund.com
by April 30th, 2015



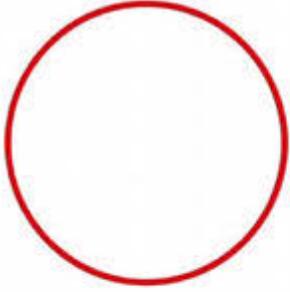
Q&A



Photographed by PRABHAT SHETTY

BHATT *naturally*

Part truth, part fiction: **Anil Thakraney** decodes Mahesh Bhatt, a walking contradiction

ne word comes to mind when you think of Mahesh Bhatt: contradiction. He's well-read, spiritual, and yet he won't think twice before hiring a porn star to arouse his audiences. He is committed to both his families, and yet has been a notorious philanderer. He'll give us the path-breaking *Arth*, and then he'll go ahead and insult our intelligence with a *Khamoshiyaan*. Making money means a lot to him, and yet he won't hesitate to speak out about social issues. But one thing can definitely be said about the 66-year-old film-maker: Whatever he does, he will find a way to entertain you. Relaxing in his cozy office in the Mumbai suburb of Khar, dressed in his trademark black shirt, Bhatt does what he does best: belt out *gyaan* on his colourful life and times.

From Smita Patil to Sunny Leone. You've come a long way.

What you see as deterioration is actually evolution. You have a questionable cultural construct, which suggests that anybody who walks into a whorehouse has deteriorated, assuming the space where Sunny Leone lives is a whorehouse. There was this great Zen monk who abandoned his monastery, and in the twilight years of his life lived with a prostitute and wrote great poems about her, which had more passion than all the so-called mystical stuff he wrote while he was in the monastery. His legendary character still resonates in the Indian space. I feel that both the need for carnal gratification and the need for intellectual stimulation are part of the human heart. I have explored every space within my psyche.

What about making money? Is there a commercial angle to your monk and the whorehouse theory?

Anybody who thinks I didn't join the movie business to make money is superimposing his own ideal on me. I came from a household that had fallen on bad times – at the age of 15 my mother asked me to help my father keep the wolf away from the door. Film-making went on to become a means of livelihood for me. Now, having made disastrous films in the beginning, like *Manzilein Aur Bhi Hain*, *Vishwasghaat*, etc, I stumbled upon my

own autobiographical idiom after my marriage went to tatters and the extramarital affair with Parveen Babi. *Arth* gave me my second innings and I went on to make other films like *Janam* and *Saaransh*. Later I had to do an *Aashiqui* because India had changed, the Soviet construct of the Eighties changed to the liberal economy of the Nineties. Then came satellite television and then the digital wonderland. People's moral references changed, and the command that came was very clear: Thou shalt gratify, not edify. I recently made a serious film called *CityLights*, which deals with rural-urban migration. I am proud of it but the lifetime business of the film is not even close to the first day's business of the Sunny Leone-starrer *Jism 2*. So it's all about following the market forces. I am not a person who's unwilling to change with changing times.

And so that's why you quit directing films? The new world order wasn't worth your effort?

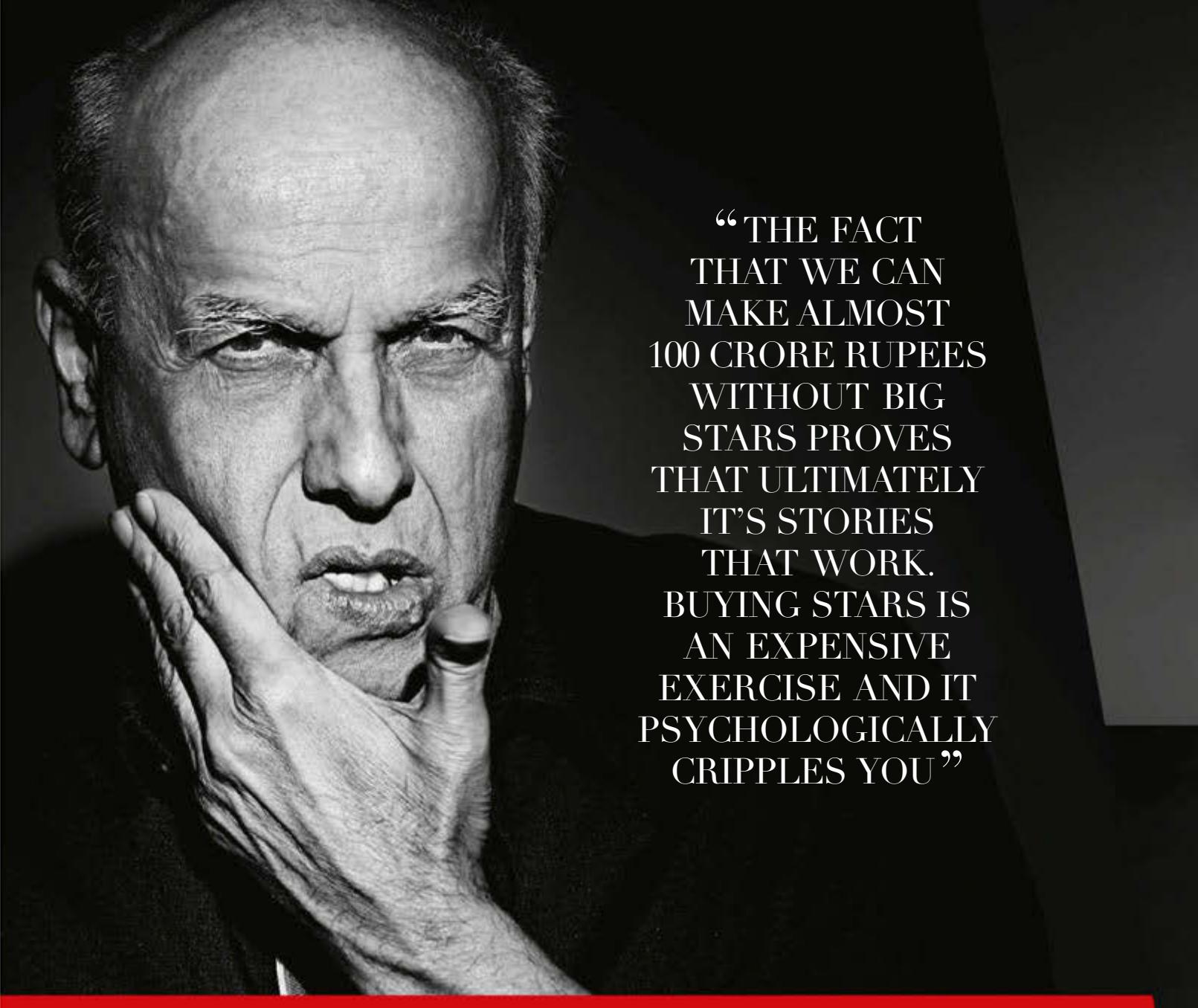
After *Zakhm*, I decided enough is enough. Every film-maker, like every streetwalker, has a time frame. I had fulfilled my urge to make movies, and so I decided to do something else, which is to create people. I am a man of ideas, and I don't have to express my ideas only through movies because the idiom of Bollywood allows me only a certain bandwidth. I write books, columns, I do activism when my heart urges me to.

And yet with *Hamari Adhuri Kahani* you seem to be returning to your roots.

Yes, after having amused the world for ten years with the kind of cinema that titillates and scintillates. I am also making a film called *Mr X*, which is about an invisible man, it's a science-fiction adventure. So I continue to comfortably oscillate between these different spaces.

I watched your last film, *Khamoshiyaan*. It was awful, worse than B-grade. What were you thinking?

That film didn't work, though it broke even. But then, who says you can't make bad films? We make films with sincerity but sometimes they turn out to be rank. The fact is I have failed on my way to success, I have made more bad films than good films. "Bring me your failures" is what Krishna said in the Gita to ➔



“THE FACT
THAT WE CAN
MAKE ALMOST
100 CRORE RUPEES
WITHOUT BIG
STARS PROVES
THAT ULTIMATELY
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THAT WORK.
BUYING STARS IS
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CRIPPLES YOU”

Arjun. In my company the blame of failure rests only on my shoulders, the credit of success is shared by all. *Khamoshiyaan* is my failure, not Karan Darra's [the director].

You don't use big stars. Ego trip or business decision?

The fact that we can make almost 100 crore rupees without big stars proves that ultimately it's stories that work. Buying stars is an expensive exercise and it psychologically cripples you. And I have always been like that. For *Saaransh*, Sanjeev Kumar was available but I chose Anupam Kher. Why would I use a diamond-studded crutch when I have my own feet to walk on?

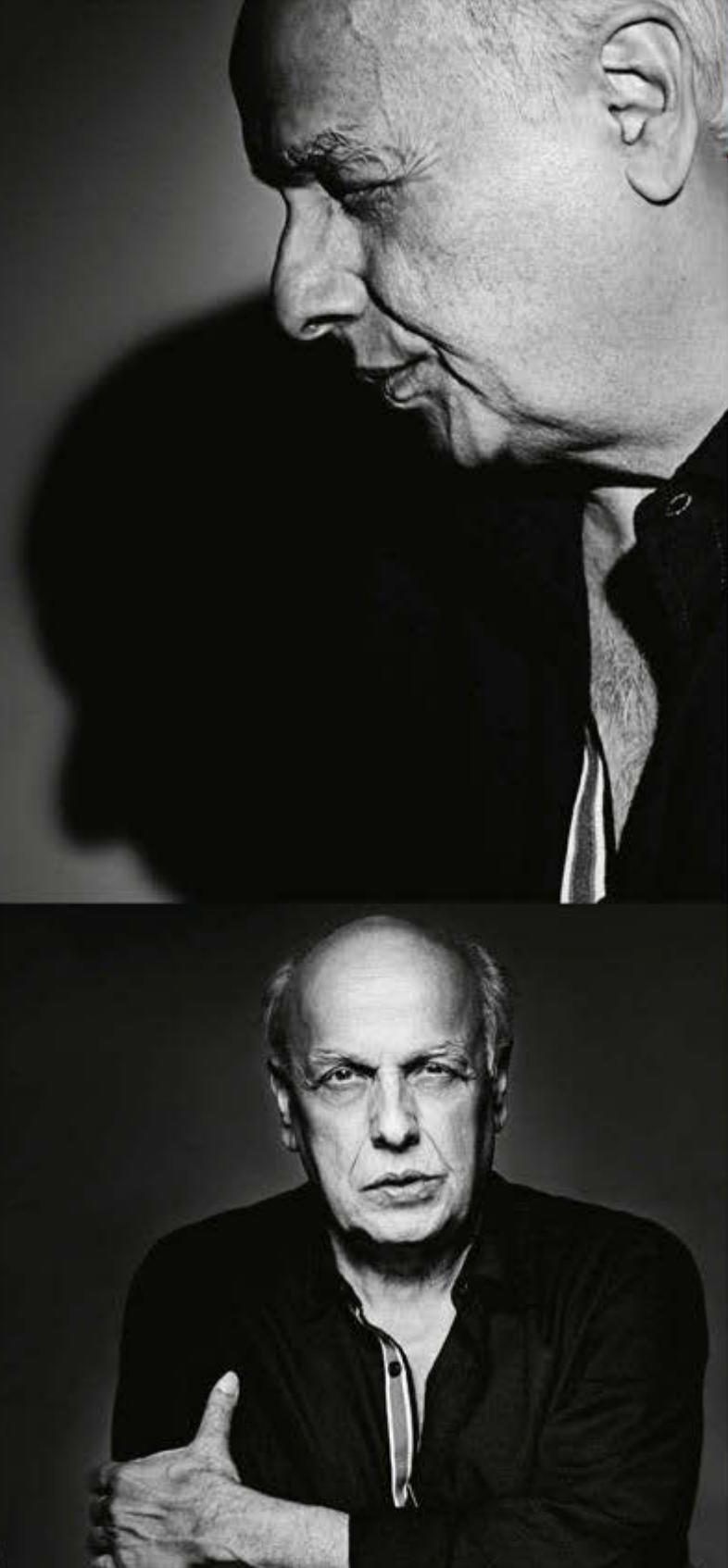
Your views on contemporary Hindi cinema?

I rarely watch Hindi movies unless I am told to for a specific reason, but I do watch a lot of Bengali films. Hindi cinema is going through a narrative crisis. You need new stories, and those can only come from people who are connected to their roots, who are intensely engaged with the process of living. I would say *Hamari Adhuri Kahani* is a new story, and it comes

from a person who has engaged with his life and the world he lives in. There is no denying that there is a dumbing down, you are catering to an impatient generation that believes anything that doesn't grab them instantly deserves to be switched off. So you are driven to the idiom of a One Day cricket match or a football match. Even *Hamari Adhuri Kahani*'s narrative is constructed with a sense of urgency.

Your first marriage broke down because you cheated, and you didn't mend your ways even after that. What's the deal?

My first marriage did not break down, though I had a relationship outside the marriage. I did not cheat, I did not play games, I moved out after my affair. She is still very much a part of my existence, I continue like an old conservative to maintain the relationship in every way. After all, it was a school romance, which flowered into marriage. And no, I did not mend my ways after that. I had a relationship with my current wife (Soni Razdan), and I married her.



What attracted you to Osho?

Osho was a pure LSD experience. LSD gave us an extra-sensory perception, it hurled us into spaces that are called religious mystical experiences. These people made us believe that these experiences would be permanent. But I realized Osho was just a wordsmith. UG Krishnamurti took me away from the merry-go-round that I was on, he plucked me out of the spiritual super bazaar.

In fact, you spent a great deal of time with UG. What was the one thing he said that had a profound impact on you?

That you must have the courage to live your life on your own terms, that real courage is the courage to stand alone. If my house is on fire, I will pour more gasoline and burn it down to the ground, I don't need to live in a half-burnt house.

Do you advise your daughter Alia on her career? Are you guys close?

I, who have violated every law that had been prescribed to me, have no business to sit on a high horse and pontificate to her. The cultural brainwashing that goes on right from infancy is something that she will have to deal with. The society that she's born into has seeped into her bones. I only give her my response to questions she asks. She is in the driver's seat of her own life, she will steer it in the direction she wants. She has gone far without my advice.

And have you sorted out your issues with Rahul Bhatt? He didn't have flattering things to say about you during the Headley affair.

[Gets annoyed.] If you choose to have a frozen memory, that's your problem, I wrote the foreword for his book, *Headley And I*. The so-called Headley crisis was a gift from the gods because that's when he discovered I stood by him like a parent would, that is the glue of trust that holds us together. But to answer your question, yes, I abandoned him in his childhood. I came back and told him, "You have a choice, you can play the fashionable victim or be a survivor." Ours is a flawed narrative by [the standards of] those traditional, normal homes, but I have seen these so-called normal homes. I am interested in the home after the guests have left, and I know what happens in those homes.

Parveen Babi. Do you feel guilty in hindsight, that you should have tried to help her deal with her schizophrenia?

[Gets more annoyed.] I never abandoned her! It was I who offered to bury her when her body was lying unclaimed in the morgue. Nobody from the film industry or the media came forward. Why? Because they didn't give a fuck about it. So why did I do it?

Because you felt remorseful?

No! When she had an attack of schizophrenia, I am the one who rescued her from electric shocks, which the industry wanted to give her. They would have turned her into a vegetable, a puppet, and made her dance in front of the camera, that's what they were interested in. The doctors, those bastards, were in cahoots with these mighty film-makers. I ran away with her to Bangalore, to UG Krishnamurti, and lived hidden there and treated her. She was advised to settle down to an ordinary life, but she chose to defy that. She came back to this dog-eat-dog industry and wanted me to be with her. I told her I didn't want to preside over her disillusionments all over again. So she chose to hurl herself into the fire. 

GET A LIFE

These 14 travel experiences will blow your mind. And, in one case, your pants

EDITED BY MEGHA SHAH



TRAVEL
SPECIAL

1

DEFROST IN AN OUTDOOR JACUZZI ON THE MATTERHORN

At 8,900 feet high and -30 degrees C, relaxation in an outdoor hot tub may come with its own discomforts – but the view's great. Stay for dinner (essentially a big bowl of hot cheese) at the Igloo-Dorf hotel, which offers accommodation in an igloo – not a theme park-wannabe one, but a real snow-and-ice kind that an Inuit would call home. The hotel does recommend you dry your hair off totally afterwards, or it may freeze and snap off come night-time.

WORDS: MEGHA SHAH; NICOLAS STECHER; VARUN GODINHO; IMAGE: ALAMY (GRANADA); GETTY IMAGES (IGLOO, GYPSY DANGER)



2 Eat the world's juiciest beef burger at In-N-Out, Los Angeles

On the outskirts of LAX stands an outlet of one of the most famed hamburger shacks in California that invented burger culture. So tempting is the iconic arrow sign that many travellers cannot resist it, hailing taxis to speed through its drive-thru, should their layover allow for it. Because In-N-Out isn't just a burger joint – it's an experience. A foodie Mecca that appeals to epicureans and philistines alike. Maybe it's the way the 100 per cent American beef sizzles, its juices moistening the slow-rising bread. Maybe it's how the cheese drips indulgently from the edges, over pickles and onions. Its appeal is most definitely not the variety: you can only order a hamburger, cheeseburger or the Double Double – that's In-N-Out parlance for a double cheeseburger – and pair it with fresh, handcut fries and a shake. Simplicity is sophistication.



Be seduced by a gypsy in a cueva

Skip the many tourist-lined flamenco performances and head to the Sacromonte district's bar-filled and cobblestoned streets in Granada. The narrow, rickety lanes are lined with caves, which make up the homes of the city's gypsy dancers. A night walk here can result in an invitation into one, followed by some wine and dance, set against the backdrop of a glistening Alhambra.



OVERDOSE ON FUNGI AT THE URBANI TRUFFLE ACADEMY, ITALY

Order a dish with truffles at a fine-dine and you'd be lucky to get a smidgen of the fungi. But at the 150-year-old family-run Urbani Tartufi, which supplies roughly 70 per cent of the world's truffles, stay for lunch and consume a lifetime's worth of the stuff in a span of 60 minutes: crostini caked with minced white truffles, rabbit and smoked bacon that's hidden deep below a few inches of black truffle shavings – even the dessert, vanilla ice cream, is drenched in a buttery truffle sauce. Each course is also accompanied by a wine. We recommend the Montefalco or Sagrantino, both native to the region.

urbanitartufi.it





STAY UP ALL NIGHT IN ST PETERSBURG

Moscow may have all the wealth, but St Petersburg has all the fun – filled with university students, and hip bars to keep them in good cheer. And the best time of year to walk its streets are the white nights: 21 days in June when the sun doesn't set. In other words, 504 hours of non-stop revelry with cheap drinks, great music and some of the hottest women on the planet.

6 The cheapest way to feel like a billionaire

If you aren't a mogul or a politician, chances are a helicopter isn't your usual mode of transport. But as a one-off experience, you can't do better than the short 15-minute ride between Cannes and the Nice airport. The chopper glides along the French Riviera, offering some of the most incredible views – including an otherwise-impossible peek at oligarch Roman Abramovich's Côte d'Azur mansion complex, located atop a gorgeous bluff. If you want to feel like a billionaire cruising in the clouds, this is the quickest – and perhaps the cheapest – way of doing it.



GET BLOWN AWAY BY A ROARING JET

Kissed by warm waters, Maho beach on the Caribbean island of Saint Martin isn't just a sun-bathing, bikini-ogling hot spot. The narrow stretch of sand also happens to be bang next to the Princess Juliana International Airport, and the only thing that lies between a roaring jumbo jet and the sea. The strong-willed grab on to the boundary wall while plane after plane takes off in full throttle, blowing everything beneath it – including, sometimes, the trousers of clinging tourists – hundreds of yards out to sea.



8



BE IN THE COOLEST CITY (FOR A MONTH) IN THE WORLD

As our January cover star Arjun Kapoor confessed to us, the most beautiful women in the world are in Montréal, Canada. Given the city's fame for frigid winters, summer is the time to prove this. That you'll be soaking in such views in what is the only true hybrid North American-European city is one thing. But throw in the Just for Laughs comedy festival, and the Montréal Jazz Festival, *et voilà* – for the month of July you've got the coolest city in the world.



9

Take an Arabian bath in Seville – at midnight

Although the ex-Andalusian capital livens up after dark, once you step inside one of its baths, at the stroke of midnight, the distant wails of flamenco dancers and cheers of revellers fade away. There are long, smoky pools of varying temperatures and a hot stone for Turkish massages, for when you've had your fill of floating around staring at the markings on the cave-like roof. The hush-hush staff, the beautiful lobby – it's all so heady. And, just when you think it can't get any better, you catch sight of a brunette emerging from the shadows and realize: this is a topless spa.



10

PRAY WITH THE DEAD IN KUTNÁ HORA, CZECH REPUBLIC

Once you're done getting so off-your-face drunk in Prague that you start seeing Kafka's ghost, get out to the town of Kutná Hora and the Sedlec Ossuary, a site haunted with the spirits of roughly 50,000 people, whose bones are piled ceiling-high in four quadrants of the basement chapel, framed by garlands, candelabras and chalices of skulls, and centred around a gigantic chandelier said to contain at least one of each bone in the human body.

Get a bird's-eye view of the world's most dangerous sport

Known as the world's most dangerous race, the Baja 1000 runs its perilous course over 1,000 miles of unforgiving Mexican desert. There are no grandstands, nor exorbitant tickets to pay for the privilege of watching. You simply drive your 4x4 to somewhere along the vast peninsula, pop open a couple of cold *cervezas* and take in the madness. Unless, of course, you've got a helicopter: Watch the spectacle of the epic race, then dive down and chase 800hp trophy trucks up close as they leap over gullies and shred trails across the desert.

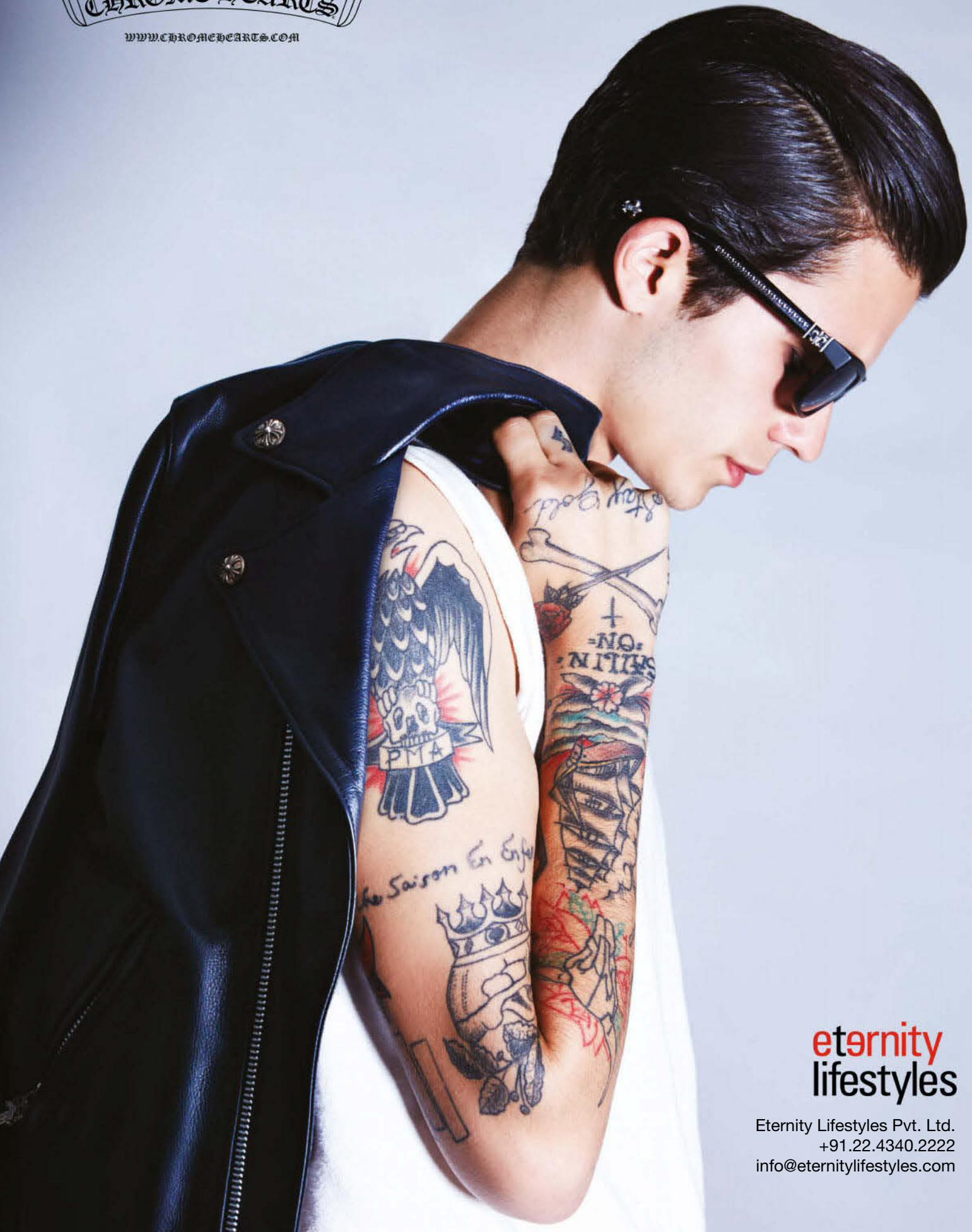
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11

CHROME HEARTS

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12

VISIT A JAPANESE LOVE HOTEL WITH YOUR SPECIAL LADY FRIEND

In Tokyo, you don't have to be a famous film star to get your lady into a love hotel, where everyone's always got one thing on their minds – but it helps.



13

Drive a monster truck over an entire nation of ice

Sure, you can visit Iceland in the springtime and be greeted by grassy fields and blushing wildflowers... and waves of tourists. But in the winter, especially in the mountainous Highlands, you can have one of the rarest experiences on the planet. Hire a 6x6 monster that climbs over snowdrifts and glaciers as if they were asphalt. At night, sleep in rustic huts or luxury hotels – either way, the psychedelia of the Northern Lights will ease you into a trance. natureexplorer.is



GET PISSED IN LJUBLJANA (IT'S IN SLOVENIA)

Drive two hours north-east from Trieste in Italy and you'll hit Europe's biggest little secret. There's Batman and Ron Weasley-inspired graffiti on the walls, murals painted on abandoned buildings, crazy hair salons called EvilHair, underground dive bars – and a statue of Slovenia's national poet, a paedophile and an alcoholic, in Ljubljana's main square. There's also a slightly creepy medieval castle straight out of Transylvania perched wonkily on a cliff at Lake Bled. But what else do you expect from a country whose national anthem is about booze?



14

MISS VOGUE

INDIA

2015
₹150

SHOPPING
SECRETS
FROM
AROUND
THE WORLD

WHERE
HAVE ALL
THE GOOD
GUYS
GONE?

ALL
THINGS
COOL

“My biggest
crush is Ranbir”
and other truths from
ALIA BHATT

18 books to make you smarter
36 must-have beauty steals
170+ hot summer buys



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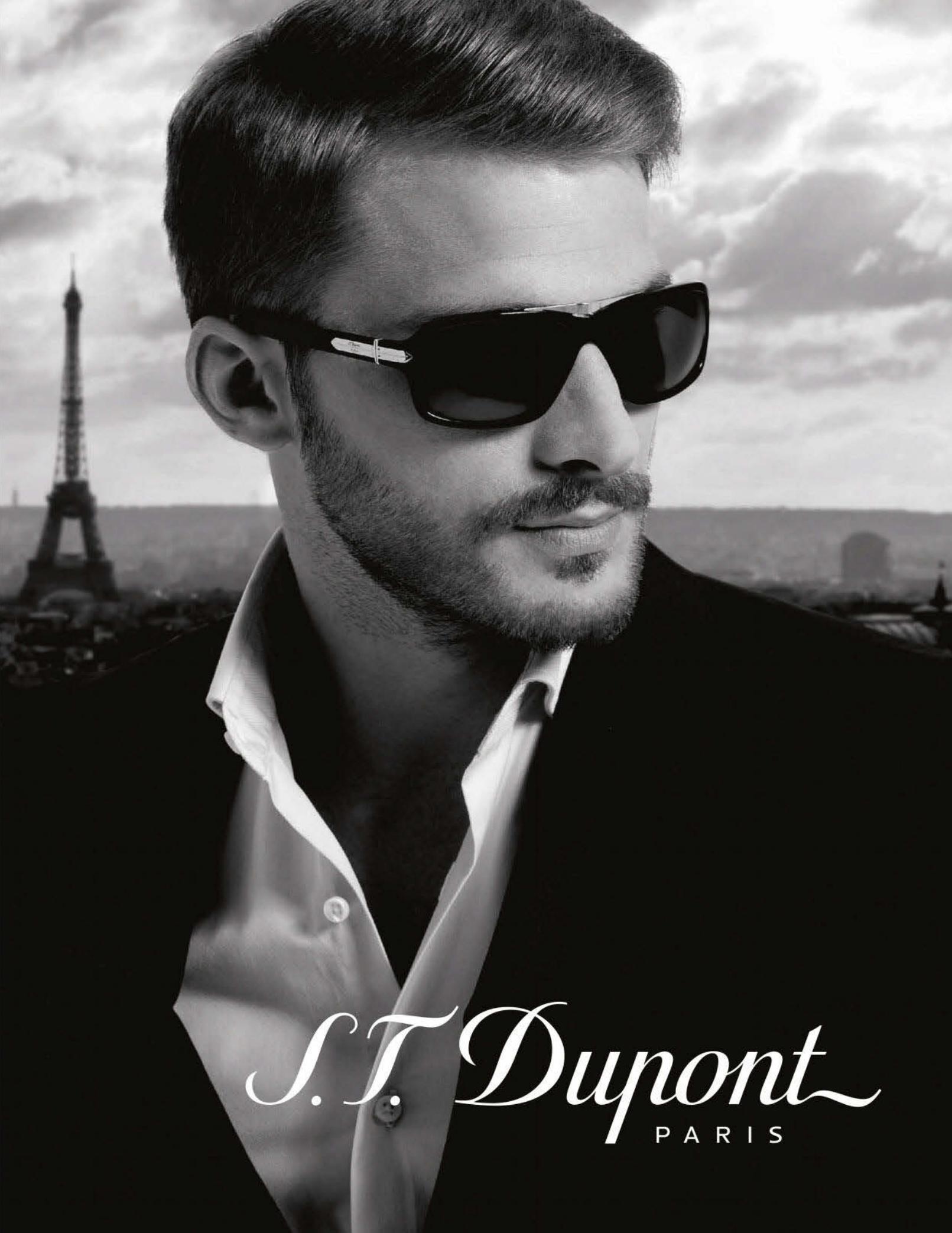
Fashion, beauty, celebs and more.

MISS VOGUE MAKES ITS BIG DEBUT!

Miss Vogue is your definitive guide to all things cool, stylish and trending for the 21st century girl. From summer lovin' style to girl power fashion, what's hot and happening for the tech-savvy teen to the stuff that's got her ticking this season... your ultimate fashion bible has arrived.

Are you ready!?

ON STANDS APRIL 2015



S.T. Dupont
PARIS

GQ drive

■ Ducati's Scrambler is an everyday commuter with superbike levels of performance

■ From zippy jet skis to luxurious yachts, the finest watercraft to take out to sea

STRIP SHOW

It's light, nimble and powerful. **Nicolas Stecher** gets astride the all-new **Ducati** in California and finds that this naked motorcycle puts up quite a performance →





Cverlooking the vast Mojave Desert in California are the San Jacinto Mountains. The craggy peaks were named after Hyacinth of Caesarea, a saint who was flogged and tortured for not denouncing his Christian beliefs. Hyacinth died of starvation, refusing to eat the only sustenance offered to him: meat given to pagan gods. It is said the early Spanish missionaries who named the range for the Cappadocian martyr did so because the jagged landscape is equally inhospitable.

Up in the crest of these unforgiving hills, Ducati Scramblers zip through the vertiginous scarps and cliffs of the arid landscape. Through the evergreen pines, boulders and dirt, the sounds of high-revving 800cc engines can be heard echoing, their exhaust pipes only half muffling the loud vibrations. To all within earshot, it is clear that some sort of mechanical tomfoolery is underway.

I'm riding one of these Scramblers, following the herd of about a dozen others, as we pierce

the desolate roadways that undulate across this high-elevation terrain. Some areas are green and dense with pine. Others are brown and barren, scarred with the black stain of recent forest fires; the landscape is studded with the charred trunks of half-consumed trees. It is peaceful and cold, the consequence of elevation and winter clime.

This is a terrain where a machine on two wheels is functional more than a lifestyle statement. Here men wear beards because the altitude temperatures demand it, and winter winds are bone-chilling. Here, snowmobiles exist not as toys for thrill-seeking but as utilitarian vehicles, much like towboats and tractors. This is where Ducati would



DUCATI SCRAMBLER

ENGINE
803CC, 75HP @ 8,250RPM

TORQUE
68NM @ 5,750RPM

PRICE
APPROX ₹8 LAKH

have you believe its customers will come from – no-nonsense men who wear flannel, wrench their own engines and wipe the grease from their hands on workwear overalls.

Still, with the Scrambler, Ducati is angling for a different kind of rider, too. The one that's found in the Palm Springs valley far below. There, bikes exist as toys, items of weekend escapism, fetishization and personalization. Well-considered statements of identity, like a Savile Row suit or a vintage Patek Philippe chronograph. Down there, in Palm Springs, snowmobiles are not the chosen vessel of duty – rather, air-conditioned golf carts are.

And yet, it's in the San Jacinto Mountains that the Scrambler is in its element. Because the Scrambler is a thoroughly unassuming bike, minimal in pretence and design. Which is not what enthusiasts have come to expect from the storied Italian manufacturer. Ducati has conquered the hearts of motorcyclists everywhere on the back of its high-performance rides. Its range-topping Panigale, for instance, is the type of Italian machinery that makes grown men weak in the knees. Sure, it can melt brains by launching from 0-100kph in 2.8 seconds, but

THE SCRAMBLER IS A THOROUGHLY UNASSUMING BIKE, MINIMAL IN PRETENCE AND DESIGN

it is the elegance of its design that melts hearts. The Panigale looks like a 205hp Anish Kapoor sculpture, handcrafted to inspire reams of poetic desire among Ducatisti everywhere.

Unlike the Panigale, the Scrambler was born for a different mission: to lure in a new buyer. It is wooing a nascent movement of riders who not only cannot afford a ₹21 lakh motorcycle, but do not particularly want a ₹21 lakh motorcycle. These younger riders aren't looking for rocket ships with blistering acceleration, or for obese cruisers burdened with saddlebags and leather tassels. They simply want a bike that can comfortably take them from Point A to Point B while making the ride between the two thoroughly enjoyable, too.

And this is where the Scrambler excels. It is a terminally simple bike – one that is easy to ride, accessible in a way that no other Ducati can claim to be. With a 31-inch seat height, even diminutive riders can swing a leg over it without fear of teetering over. And it is light – about 172 kilos when tanked up. The handlebars rise tall and wide, offering an extremely comfortable riding position when you're rolling around town, upright and relaxed. This is a bike that is equally at home as a daily commuter as it is slaloming through

THE V-TWIN'S OUTPUT WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU WANTING FOR POWER, OR OFFER AN UNEXPECTED BURST THAT'LL SOIL YOUR LEVI'S

mountainous California switchbacks or cruising along a tortuous coastal road from Mumbai to Goa.

While challenging the elevations changes and copious curves of the Palms to Pines Highway, you'll come to appreciate the easy torque delivery of the Scrambler. Most of its power and torque (75 horses and 68Nm, respectively) come from the bottom end of its revs, delivering them smoothly and predictably. Engaging first gear and taking off can be a little jerky, but that's the only place you'll ever encounter launch. Once you get the hang of it, you'll start from naught much more smoothly. The V-twin's admirable output will never leave you wanting for power, nor will it ever offer an unexpected burst that'll soil your Levi's.

The engine is borrowed from the now-defunct 796 Monster, and

inherits ABS-enabled Brembo brakes up front from the Panigale, meaning the entry-level Scrambler boasts half the braking system of a superbike – Ducati always aims to be first-in-class in braking, and the Scrambler is no exception. Knobby tires customized by Pirelli finish off the standard bike.

Where the Scrambler breaks from stubborn Ducati tradition is in its vast potential for customization. Three kinds of handlebars, headlamps, vintage-styled seats, high-mounted Termignoni exhaust pipes, spoke wheels, saddlebags that convert to hand luggage and what seems like a treasure trove of aluminium side panels can be changed up. Polished chrome, camouflage, carbon fibre, even plaid panels can be attached to the teardrop steel tanks to tell the world what kind of motorcyclist you consider yourself.

Some might see these options as trite, pre-packaged baubles of self-expression, but they allow this one bike to take on many forms. And while this level of accessorization might be necessary in the modern marketplace, it is not what makes the Scrambler a great motorcycle. It is a great motorcycle because it is everything you want in a modern, entry-level bike – and then some. ☺



THE ITALIAN JOB
From the handlebar and headlamp to the wheels and seat, the Scrambler's always up for a custom job



CASI AWAY

Out there in the vast blue, these are all the water toys you'll need to have one heck of a party



JET SKIS



KAWASAKI ULTRA 310LX

₹20.5 LAKH

Built by one of the world's best superbike manufacturers, this jet ski's got a stonking 1,500cc engine that generates an incredible 310hp of power (almost double that of a compact luxury SUV). Plus, the three-seater comes with a pair of aft-facing speakers. Kygo's "Firestone" on loop? Pump it up. All the way up.



SEA-DOO RXT 260 XRS-AS

₹19 LAKH

This one's an absolute blast to ride. Rev hard, keep the throttle pinned and you'll hit speeds of over 100kph - not a surprise, considering it was developed by Bombardier Recreational Products (yes, the Canadian business jet major). And when it's time to dial down, this baby's got a patented reverse thrust mechanism that gets you to naught in roughly 50 feet (half the distance of any other jet ski in the market). Ready, set, stop.

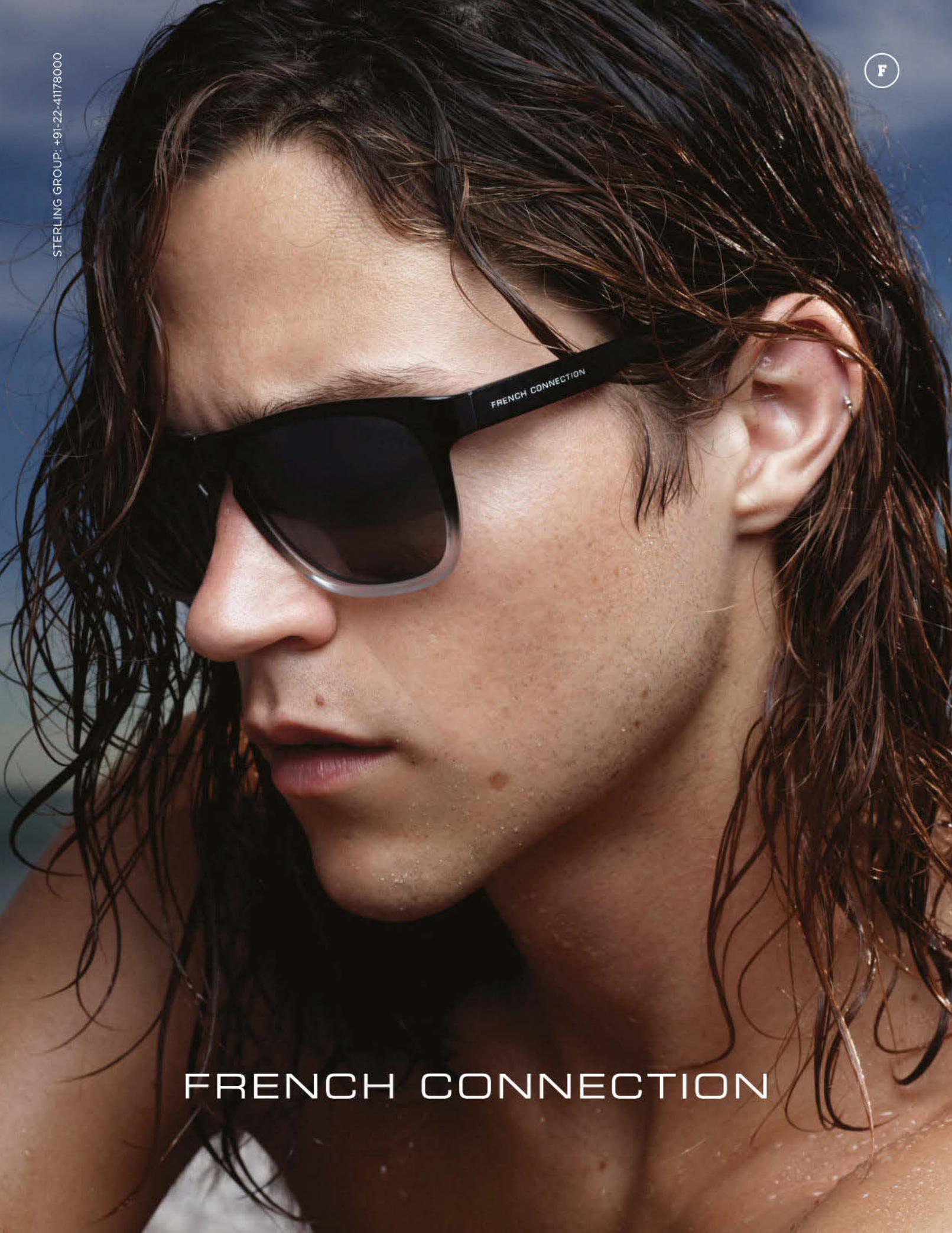


KAYAK

AQUANAMI KAYAK

₹4 LAKH

This compact kayak has a small 9.5hp four-stroke engine. And, in a throwback to SEGA, there's a dart joystick to manoeuvre it. Taking this out is almost as much fun as playing *Contra*.



FRENCH CONNECTION



▲ FERRETTI 550

CHARTER AT ₹80,000 FOR THREE HOURS

A flybridge is a vessel with a duplicate set of controls - one located on the open deck, and the other in the enclosed station inside below. Why? If you owned one of these beauties, picture yourself standing on the open deck, piloting this craft and showing your guests who's the cap'n of this ship.



▲ PERSHING 50

CHARTER AT ₹85,000 FOR THREE HOURS

This 50-foot performance yacht isn't designed to listlessly bob around the ocean - it's meant to rip. Which is why it's got a coupé-like, aerodynamic roofline to help it hit speeds of up to 80kph. It'll likely create some serious wake, so if you're queasy, cocoon yourself in one of the three well-appointed cabins on board.



SCARAB 215 HO IMPULSE

₹50 LAKH

Watersports junkies: This boat's got a powerful pair of 250hp Rotax engines and a lightweight wakeboard tower that'll pull you and your board along when you're out surfing. Remember to bring those fancy aerial moves.



LAGOON CATAMARAN 560

₹16 CRORE A POP, BUT YOU CAN CHARTER ONE AT ₹20,000 AN HOUR

Windy conditions? Perfect time to head out in this sailing yacht. Once you find a sweet spot out in the vast blue, drop anchor. The twin hull design makes the boat super stable over the surface of the water as your guests lounge on deck, dive in for a swim or indulge in a spot of fishing. It really is #thegoodlife



WHERE TO BUY OR CHARTER
A BOAT
OCEAN BLUE OCEANBLUE.IN
WEST COAST MARINE
WESTCOASTMARINE.CO.IN
MARINE SOLUTIONS MARINESOLUTIONS.IN

MAYBACH

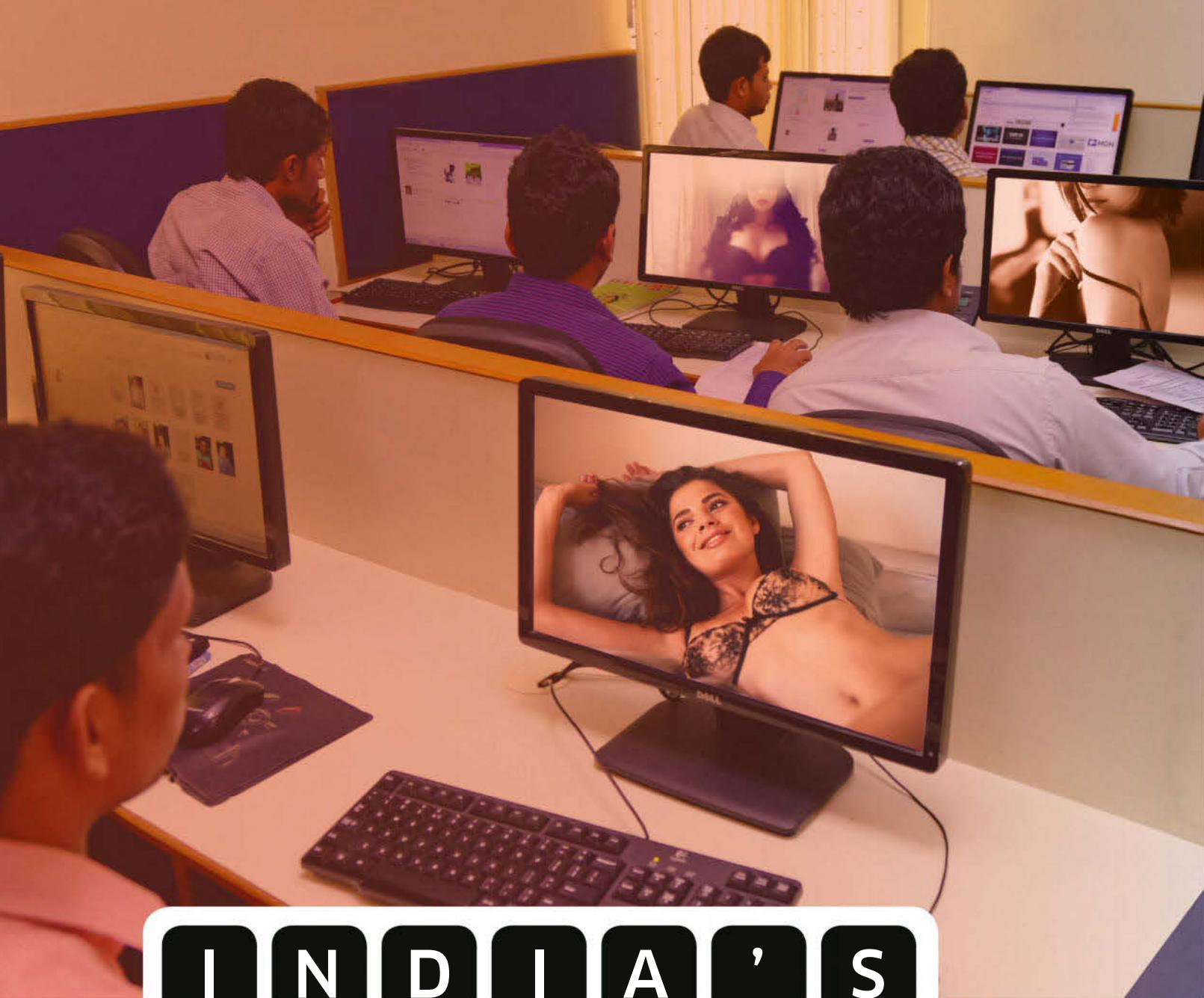


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ACCESSORIES - EYEWEAR - LEATHER GOODS - SADDLERY



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INDIA'S SECRET INTERNET CENSORS

Come, check out the real back end of social media, where secret digital janitors wipe clean gore and porn, staving off spammers, scamsters and webcam girls



t is two in the afternoon, and a young woman named Sangeeta is at her computer in Bengaluru, staring intently at a picture of a soft-bellied blonde wearing a transparent thong, down on all fours on a sofa. A click of the mouse, and the blonde vanishes. In her place appears a real bruiser of a dude in fatigues, standing at the bottom of a grassy garden slope, placing a proprietorial foot on a disused battle tank. He is replaced in turn by three lines of a pearlescent substance on a soft pink surface. Sangeeta pauses, squints and finally realizes what she's been gazing at: a post-coital autograph on a bare midriff. "I don't like that kind of photograph," she says as she hits delete, "but it's work, so we have to do [it]."

The thong lady reappears, this time upright and clutching at her breasts. She is cast aside once again. "She's a scammer, so we have to block," Sangeeta explains. Then appears a little white-blond baby, photographed mid-crawl. "I feel very good when a cute child is coming," says Sangeeta, smiling, "but we have to trash."

These are profile photographs from around the world, from Tashkent to Togo. They represent a 30-second job to workers like Sangeeta, who spends eight hours a day, six days a week, wading through tens of thousands of such photographs uploaded onto dating websites. She weeds out money shots and dismembered bodies, and intercepts messages from scam artists, cam girls and escorts, ensuring everything falls within each client website's specific showability standards.

Sangeeta, along with her 70 colleagues at the IT company Foiwe, are commercial content moderators; detritivores scuttling the social media seafloor every day in search of unsightly wastes to sweep up. Ever since collecting artifacts of experience on social media became a more exalted pursuit than experience itself – and Instagrammed meals became as essential to eating as cutlery – there's a whole lot more seafloor to cover. Going by a recent estimate, internet dwellers are collectively sloshing out upwards of 1.8 billion photos on Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram, and piling four billion videos onto YouTube every day. About 40 per cent of those images and 80 per cent of the videos are considered "inappropriate for business" according to a white paper by the IT firm Cognizant.

As people of all ages join the online fray, the quantum of what's being tossed out – "user-generated content" in IT-ese – rises every

month, as does the need for more scourers. Yet there are no reliable figures for the size of the workforce that's elbow deep in messages, videos and photographs, zapping away gore and sleaze and cutting off your nephew's supply of contraband *Transformers* videos.

In an article last year, Adrien Chen of *Wired* magazine quoted a consultant who estimated that "well over 100,000" content moderators were hard at work scrubbing the world's social media sites, mobile apps and cloud storage services. The actual figure might be even larger, says Lilly Irani, a professor of communication at the University of San Diego who studies such outsourced

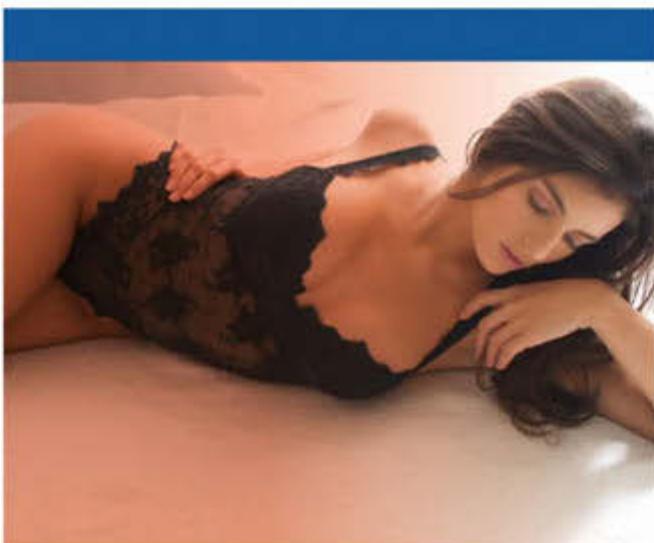
"cognitive piecework", as she calls it. "The global technology industry's promises of digital abundance are predicated on hiding this crucial work," she says, "work that can't be automated away but that tech companies hide to sustain their own magic."

That might explain why most commercial content moderation takes place under the cover of non-disclosure agreements, and how content moderators come to toil out of sight in business-friendly conurbations outside cities like Manila or Bengaluru. One thing is clear, though: Without these "digital janitors", as data scientist Matt Mohebbi calls them, the social networking arenas we throng everyday would become unfrequentable – quicksand pits choked with decapitated heads and uncensored cam girls. And they'd be completely worthless to their owners.

No one has a keener sense of these moderators' indispensability than Foiwe's founder and director, Suman Howlader. His company has commercial content moderation to thank for more than 80 per cent of its revenue, and for its four-year existence.

Foiwe gets its name from an acrostic Howlader composed: "Fusion Of Intelligence With Excellence", displayed proudly on a red-framed poster at the entrance of his Bengaluru back office, located on the second floor of an unlovely building that it shares with a cosmetics retailer, a company selling home insurance and a vendor of hearing aids. Foiwe

is recruiting two moderators today, so its slender hallway and the staircase leading up to the offices are clogged with over a hundred young men in pinstriped shirts and nylon backpacks, exuding equal parts earnestness, desperation and sweat. Howlader, his HR consultant Nalini and I inadvertently crush three of them behind the conference-room door trying to get in. ■■■



"The global technology industry's promises of digital abundance are predicated on hiding this work that can't be automated away but that tech companies hide to sustain their own magic"

CLICK HERE



"This is what we go through every time we need to hire someone," says Howlader, a baby-faced 33-year-old in rimless glasses. Since Foiwe was incorporated in 2010, he's needed more and more of them. Back then, Foiwe had a starter kit of three moderators; when this round of recruiting winds up, it'll have 90. In this time, the company's turnover has surged from 3.1 million to 44.3 million rupees. Howlader owes the boost in fortunes to his popularity among his chosen clientele: the largest dating websites in the world. "At least five out of the top ten dating sites in the world as ranked by ComScore are our clients," he says.

These include Wamba, a Russian dating network now trying to expand internationally, and Growlr, an American mobile app dedicated to helping "gay bears make furry friends and find cubsbands". The two companies alone represent something like 20 million users, all of them tossing out visual come-hithers at a furious clip. Howlader's staff parses about a million images daily, working in three eight-hour-shifts – at 6am, 1pm and 10pm. "They work 24x7, making sure users have a pleasant experience," Howlader explains. "It's a laborious and tedious job."



Satya, a lean young shift leader from Puri, Orissa, is in charge of one of Foiwe's biggest ticket clients, a European supersite worth 300 million euros that's recently been swallowing a different dating site every year. It's a lot of work, and it shows. He just wound up a week's worth of night shifts this morning, and little pink veins run like tributaries under his exhausted eyes. "All day and night photos are coming in, and our workers take actions on them," he says. Whenever a user of a dating site Foiwe handles creates a profile, filling it with photographs and self-conscious personal information, it appears in a web-based tool on a moderator's screen in Bengaluru. Workers are expected to approve or flag everything in a twinkle of a cursor. Over Skype, shift leaders like Satya help speed things up, hastening along under-performers to instantly settle debates such as "man or woman?" and "dater or scam artist?".

The most recent photo on Satya's screen is a pair of koala bears. "Who's going to date this?" he exclaims, clicking it away into netherspace. In its place appears a blond baby sporting preternaturally white diapers. "Or this! Kids is going to date someone or what? As you can see," he says, "[Users] are putting up anything [as their profile photo]. Eighty per cent is stolen pornography photos, then there is violent, nudity, butchering also... We are purifying this site. So only genuine persons are dating here."

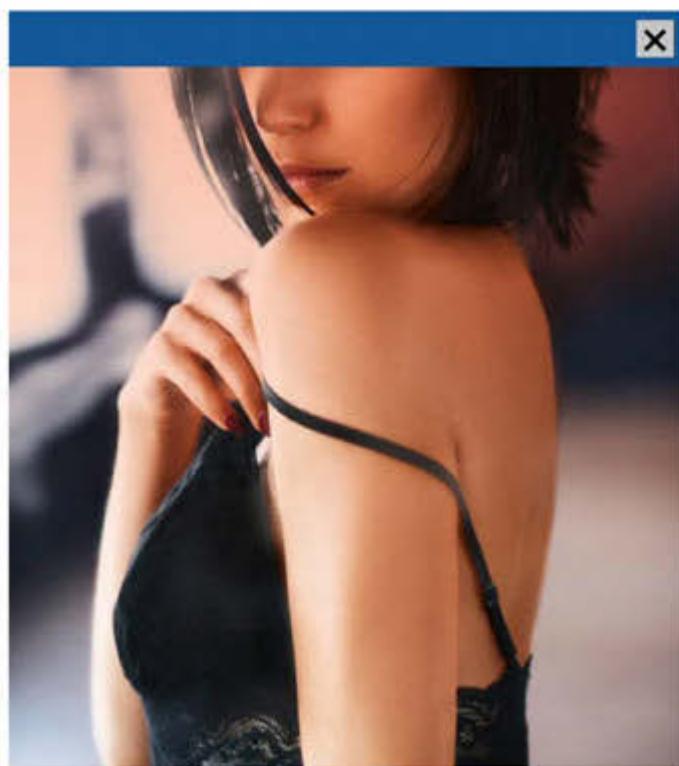
The process of purification resembles a video game, if a very boring one, scoring points for sorting a pile of socks. Images appear onscreen, and workers bin pictures of guns pointing to heads, gory accidents and frothy pearl necklaces. They delete profiles featuring porn stars, most of which belong to fake or spammer accounts. They set aside babies, houses and Hollywood stars (or their European/CIS equivalents) in a "public" folder, and squirrel away nude selfies in a "private" (or "erotic") folder. Bikini photos get conditional approval: "Nowadays everybody is taking selfies in bikini," says Satya. "If that person is in swimming pool or sea-beach that's allowed because they're taking bath. But if they're in the bedroom, that comes private."

Satya approves everything else after a few persnickety adjustments. Profile photos erroneously centred on an armpit or a blurry passerby are cropped and recentered, and those featuring more than one person are tossed out into the "public" folder in a corner of his screen.

Some clients are more permissive than others. The amorous bears of Growlr may appear kitted out in S&M gear, or with a hand down their straining Speedos, but they won't be censored. The European supersite – whose identity Foiwe is not permitted to reveal – is pickier. Its list of content guidelines proscribes animation

characters, magazine covers, celebs, masks, wigs, women's nipples and genitals, "including buttocks and camel toes". Men in dresses, however, make the cut. "Don't be too strict about this," the guidelines note, "They will be heavily offended if you remove their picture, because this is what they look like."

Photos of the suspiciously alluring are subjected to a quick Google image search to make sure they're not someone pretending to be an actor, or a "glamour model". Most Foiwe workers get a rundown on the "eminent personalities" wherever their customer base is large, but they still make the occasional wrong call. Workers from Andhra Pradesh who live in miraculous ignorance of the stars in Bollywood's firmament have been known to approve profile photos featuring Shah Rukh Khan. And all of them have a tough time telling "real" girls from professional poseurs, particularly when



One thing is clear, though: Without these "digital janitors", as data scientist Matt Mohebbi calls them, the social networking arenas we throng everyday would become unfrequentable – quicksand pits choked with decapitated heads and uncensored cam girls

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it comes to Russians. "They are quite prettier than [girls in] other locations," says Howlader. "And they have very good cameras. So genuine photos can look like portfolio photos."

All the while, there are targets to meet. A little ticker at the bottom of the screen constantly reminds workers of how many photos are "in queue". When the number inches upwards of 500, a shift leader sends out a rousing battle cry: "Speed up!" and everyone leans in and sets about googling and trashing with renewed intensity. Every big client also has a "Fake Team" charged with baiting and blocking a prescribed number of scammers – typically 400 scammers per head per day.

After a year-long stint heading the European supersite's Fake Team, Satya is something of a scammers' taxonomist. "There are three types of scammers," he says. "First, you have the fake product scam." This is the sort of Viagra-flogging sludge that lines the bottoms of your inboxes. "Then," he says, "You have lottery-type scam. They'll say, 'I found this money funds unattended, or I work in a bank and my client died, and I need someone I can trust to transfer money to, so we can meet and share it later.'"

Then, there's the "romantically involved scam", a long con that unfolds in inboxes over months. It all begins with a friendly email from a startlingly beautiful female hairdresser or, often, a distinguished male army officer. "They put up a picture of a man in army uniform," says Satya, "and say: 'I am working in peacekeeping in Kabul, I have no internet there, please call me on my number.'" Surely that's harmless, a little phone chat? "Oh no," he says, shaking his head. "That's where the scam starts." Its intended end: a transfer of funds from a lonely heart or housewife, desperate to meet their suitor.

For that to happen, though, scammers have a Foiwe-conducted obstacle course to get through. First, they have to waylay the Fake Teams' comprehensive database replete with photos, email addresses and URLs, and evade their constant trawl for suspicious messages. Then, they have to avoid racking up "points" for suspicious activity, like sending the same message out to 5,000 people or logging in from an IP address at a different location from the one on their profile. They'd also have to dodge their automatic blocklist, whose ever-lengthening compendium of solicitations includes: "I will send you the money I promise", "if you need my sex service" and "do you mind helping me out Dear". Also "I am now living in Ghana".

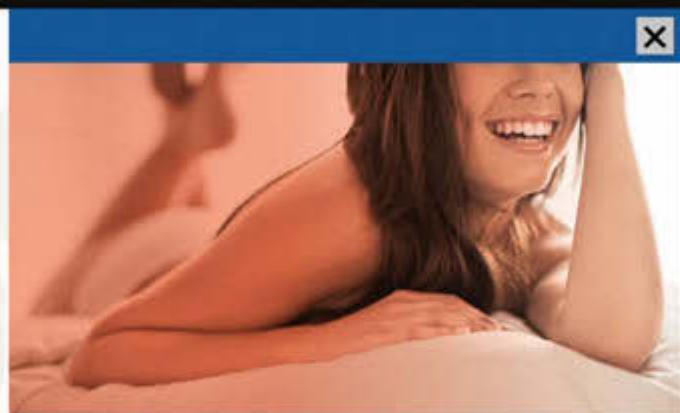
"Ninety-five per cent of scammers live in Ghana and Nigeria," proclaims Rajeev Srivastava, the keeper of the list.



he previous articles about "content workers", people working for companies like YouTube or Facebook, make it sound like the guys at Foiwe are spelunkers lost in the most terrifying grottoes of the human psyche, faced with simultaneous beheadings, animal torture and snuff films. But Foiwe's workers are, for the most part, confronted with tamer material, possibly because representations of beheading and animal torture tend to have the opposite effect of a pick-up line.

This isn't to say they never come across anything that disturbs them. Satya recalls seeing a screen grab of a semi-decapitated Daniel Pearl during his first few months at work. "That was a very rough photo I couldn't forget," he recalls. His co-worker Dharmesh, who lost his brother to crossfire at India's most explosive border, feels a spasm of remembered grief every time he sees a person pointing a gun at someone's head – an inadmissible yet not uncommon choice for a profile pic in some quarters of Russia.

Far more common, and far more disturbing to Dharmesh and his colleagues, is the stuff of every teenager's wet dreams. During his first week at work, Dharmesh was horror-stricken at the onscreen downpour of penises and colliding midsections. He thought of his



Vimal Raj, whose parents are sugarcane farmers, is now inured to "full nudity", but during his first week, the images "disturbed my mind. I thought: Chee! What kind of a job I'm doing?!"

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parents back home in Tirupati, groundnut farmers who'd scraped together the funds for his electrical engineering degree, and had to fight the urge to quit on the spot. Vimal Raj, a Bengaluru native with a master's degree in computer science, whose parents are sugarcane farmers, is now inured to "full nudity", even porn, but during his first week six months ago, the barrage of pornographic images "disturbed my mind. I thought: Chee! What kind of a job I'm doing?!"

This might explain why Foiwe counts only eight women among its staff of 70. And it's not likely to hire many more. Chandan, a shift leader from Orissa, remembers having to train a young woman from Kerala three months ago. "After I gave her training, she got nude photos," says Chandan. "One was a fully nude Asian man from Israel. She covered her face and burst into tears. The next day, she told me, 'I can't see these photos' and left the job."

"Girls definitely don't love this job," says Nalini of HR, a diminutive woman whose air of unforced earnestness suggests she might be the "good cop" during recruitment interviews. And Howlader agrees, "Not everyone likes it," but both of them attribute their 20 per cent annual attrition rate to thwarted aspiration, not outraged cultural sensitivities. "Most of them want to be a software engineer or developer in 'pure IT', not in a BPO." Some of them, like Vimal Raj, come to think of it as "social work". Being recent graduates, most of them say with a shrug that they're in it for the experience, after all, experience that they hope will lead to better work.

It's not clear that it will. "They could position this experience as 'community leaders' and get into a company like Reddit, or maybe social media reputation management," says Vivek Shenoy, a Pune-based IT consultant. "However, it's still a stretch. This is a pretty low-end service, requiring the bare minimum of training. They're just sifting through white noise and ensuring UGC (user-generated content) guidelines."

Still, Nalini isn't worried about running out of employees, or even losing the ones she has hired. "They may leave," she says, "but it's a competitive market. Many of them will come back." ☺

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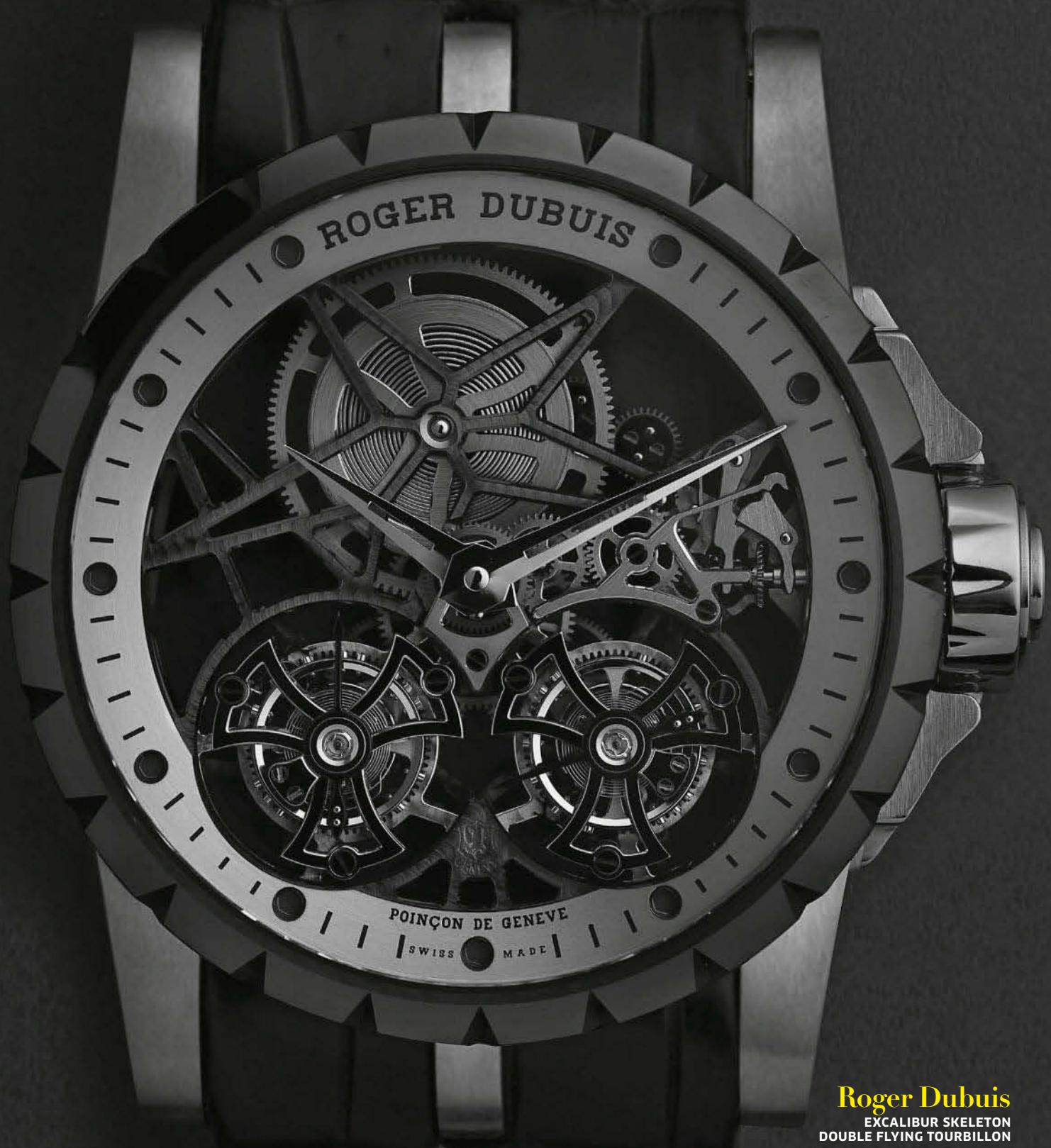




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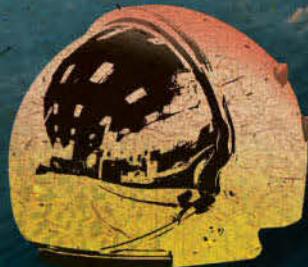
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177

ARE WE ALONE IN
THE UNIVERSE?

BY ALOK JHA

PROBABLY NOT.
AND LIFE ON OTHER
PLANETS IS MORE
VIVID THAN YOU
EVER IMAGINED



If you were to go by *Star Wars* or *Guardians Of The Galaxy*, intergalactic wars are being fought and new worlds are being born at this very moment. It's a universal fact of any sci-fi story set in space: The galaxies are teeming with life.

As a species, we're fascinated by the idea of what life might look like in the outer realms. For millennia, we have gazed upon the stars and planets, sent up endless probes to examine them more closely, even listened for radio signals that might hint at the existence of an intelligent species out there.

But if we did find life elsewhere, would we recognize it? There's always the possibility that aliens might look exactly like humans. But they might also look like elephants. Or bacteria. Or they could be shapeless beings that are invisible to us, lurking in our space-time continuum in another dimension.

When scientists started looking for life outside Earth decades ago, they initially focused on looking for planets like our own – and therefore biology like ours.

There's no reason why that should be the case, though. Even on our planet, life forms exist in places that push the bounds of what we call "normal". Extremophiles, for example, are species that can survive in conditions that would quickly kill humans and other more "standard" life forms. These single-celled creatures are found in boiling hot vents of water thrusting through the ocean floor or at temperatures well below the freezing point of water. The front ends of some of these creatures that live near these deep-sea vents

IMAGINE WE SPOTTED AN EARTH-LIKE PLANET WITH A FAR DENSER ATMOSPHERE THAN OURS. IN THAT ENVIRONMENT, THINGS WOULD BE ABLE TO FLY MUCH MORE EASILY AND WE MIGHT FIND CREATURES AS BIG AS WHALES MOVING GRACEFULLY THROUGH THE SKY. SOUNDS RIDICULOUS, RIGHT? IN FACT, IT BREAKS NONE OF THE RULES OF PHYSICS OR BIOLOGY

are 200 degrees C warmer than their back ends. Extremophiles tell us that we need to be more imaginative about what we think of as the "correct" conditions for life.

Take the surface of Saturn's moon, Titan. In 2005, when the Huygens probe landed there, it sent back images of an orange, frigid landscape covered in boulders of water ice and pools of liquid methane. Some scientists began considering what life might look like in those conditions and came up with something that, to our eyes, would barely be living at all. Any living cells here would need a huge surface area to function. So on Titan, life forms might look like giant sheets of paper that have to work day and night to suck in sparsely distributed nutrients from their environment. The scientists described life on Titan's moon as the equivalent of living in the frozen Arctic, where you would need to hunt for every meal, versus life on Earth, which is like living on a tropical island where there's fruit in the trees and all you have to do is lay back and let one fall on you.

As we discover more about other worlds, our imagination needs to expand as well. We began visiting the other planets in our solar system in the Seventies, and we have only known that there are planets outside it since the late Nineties. Now we know about almost 2,000 exoplanets, and astronomers think there are probably billions of them orbiting stars throughout our galaxy. The canvas of possibility has never been larger.

Imagine we spotted an Earth-like planet with a far denser atmosphere than ours. In that environment, things would be able to fly much more easily and we might find creatures as big as whales moving gracefully through the sky. Sounds ridiculous, right? In fact, it breaks none of the rules of physics or biology. While we move through the air on Earth without thinking, flies find it much more difficult – because of their tiny size, the air they see is not an invisible background but a gluey fluid that they have to "swim" through.

Scale that up and, on our imaginary planet, a whale could take advantage of the ultra-dense atmosphere in the same way.

On a giant gas planet (something like a super-sized Jupiter), the crushing pressures in the centre would preclude much in the way of life, but what about high up in the atmosphere? Life forms there could, in essence, be sentient balloons that ride the air currents and live on the specific cocktail of gases in that planet's atmosphere.

Even if we restrict our search to life similar to ours, we know that a fifth of our galaxy's ten billion sun-like stars have planets circling them; planets that would get around the same amount of light energy that Earth gets from the sun. This means a possibility of at least two billion planets with the potential for liquid water on their surfaces, one of the basic ingredients that astronomers look for in the search for life elsewhere.

At this point, we have very little information about these planets. Many are just a single pixel on a wide image taken by a telescope in space. Imagine if everything we knew about Earth was squeezed down into a single pixel of colour – you would be far away from understanding the richness of life on our planet.

But our instruments get better every year. Our ability to take and process images gets better every day. If there is something out there, you can be sure we'll find it sooner rather than later.

Alok Jha is a London-based science journalist. His book, The Water Book – The Extraordinary Story Of Our Most Ordinary Substance, is out next month

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180

AGE OF EMPIRES

BY UDAY BENEGAL

THE RISE AND FALL OF SoBo

I grew up in South Bombay. First Altamount Road, then Breach Candy. Then, when I hit my teens, most of my hanging out happened at Nepean Sea Road, atop a water tank on the terrace of an apartment building where my buddy lived. A bunch of us would gather there with a regularity only the young and responsibility-free are capable of. The water tank provided a vantage point from which approaching parents could be spotted before they noticed the cigarettes being stubbed out.

My formative years were spent entirely in South Bombay: school at Warden Road, junior college at Churchgate, collegiate diploma programme (I dropped out of degree-college on principle) at Peddar Road. There was never any need to venture beyond Worli – yes, that cliché, but it was true. Everything that mattered for one's well-being and enjoyment existed in the city's southern enclave. And not just for its residents; almost everyone with a hankering for a bit of culture and entertainment made their way downtown at some point.

If you were jonesing for an "English movie", Sterling, Eros, Regal, Metro, Strand, Liberty Deluxe, New Empire and New Excelsior, located in the nabes of Fort, Churchgate, Marine Lines and Colaba, were your destinations. The suburban ones were Hindi-only. Jazz, rock or Western classical music your thing? Rang Bhavan, Brabourne Stadium and Jazz By The Bay were where you'd find your genre of choice. For English theatre you headed to the NCPA, Patkar Hall, Sophia Bhabha Hall or the Homi Bhabha Auditorium.

The restaurants in SoBo were cooler, better and more varied than anywhere else in the city. Irani cafés proffered the best bun-maska-chai, mawa cakes and bread pudding you'd ever tasted. And then there were the dive bars – Trishna (yes, that's how it started), Gokul, Sudama, Grand Centre – where you could nurse your quarter of cheap whisky in the company of an endless stream of masala peanuts and ladyfish fry.



WHEN I MOVED BACK, I WAS SADDENED TO ESPY THE SORRY LITTLE DEAD FISH SOUTH BOMBAY HAD BECOME. SUPER-RICH SOCIALITES AND EXPATS WITH EXPENSE ACCOUNTS HAD TURNED TRISHNA INTO AN UPSCALE RESTAURANT WITH TRIPLE-SCALE PRICES

When I got married and moved to Versova, I was devastated about leaving the part of the city I loved and knew so deeply and so intimately. Living for nine years in what to me was akin to an armpit pushed me into jumping ship and scurrying off to New York City. It was South Bombay or bust. South Bombay was out of reach, so I chose to bust out.

Nine years later, when I moved back, I was saddened to espouse the sorry little dead fish South Bombay had become. Super-rich socialites and expats with expense accounts and a subscription to *Wine Spectator* had turned Trishna into an upscale restaurant with triple-scale prices. Cafe Britannia had responded to its *Lonely Planet* renown by getting even more decrepit, featuring rip-off rates and rebalanced proportions (its famed berry pulao now offsets the paucity of mutton with an increase in volume of rice). The government had shut down Rang Bhavan; Patkar, Sophia Bhabha and Homi Bhabha had become performance-space footnotes; and Jazz By The Bay added the prefix "Not Just" to its title and began to announce

karaoke nights. The cinema halls that hadn't turned into empty shells now emblazoned Bollywood fare on their marquees.

The dynamism had all moved north and so had the people. Bandra had become the hub of gustatory adventure. Practically every successful restaurant in another part of the city aspires to a Bandra chapter. Andheri West is a township unto itself, with spas, bars, boîtes and movie theatres, requiring none of its residents to brave the disastrous traffic snarls that lead out of it unless their lives depend on it. For the denizens of the slew of gated communities in Borivali, Malad and Goregaon, there's a mall within car's reach designed to serve their appetites for amusement.

The upside of these migrations has been the decongestion of South Bombay and, with that, a tremendous opportunity for its resurrection. Glimpses of ferment do take place, like the annual Kala Ghoda Festival and the opening of hip new joints like the Ayaz Basrai-designed Colaba Social. South Bombay is still the city's most attractive neighbourhood, with wide roads, grand old buildings and older, even more grandiose, trees.

Last year, the Mumbai Port Trust announced that its 1,800-acre swathe of waterfront running along the island city's southerly seaboard would be opened up for development. The potential for use – and abuse – is gargantuan. We could have the additional housing, open spaces and recreational facilities we've been promised for so long. Think parks, amphitheatres, tree-lined walkways, restaurants and water-based transportation systems. Imagine buskers and fire-eaters and mimes and street theatre. But there could also be a repeat of this great city's greater failures, with politicians and builders and bureaucrats yet again squandering all chances to further fatten their bulging pockets. South Bombay, the bells of hope are clanging again – heed the call. ☺

Uday Benegal shills for the Whirling Kalpas

REAL HEROES LIVE OUTSIDE THE MOVIES

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(L-R) Dr. Krishna Rao - Maaya Foundation, Malvinder Mohan Singh and Shivinder Mohan Singh - Fortis Foundation

Being human

CLOTHING





182

HEARTBREAK HOTEL

BY CHASTITY FERNANDES

IN WHICH CHASTITY FLIRTS WITH MONOGAMY

I am hopelessly in love. Truly, madly, deeply. I know, you didn't think it could happen to me. Frankly, I didn't think it could happen to me. But then I met this wonderful, sexy, charming man in a bar one night, and a couple of hours later we were fucking in the back of a taxi before finishing off in his apartment. Six months later, I've all but moved in; we're talking about a future; I've met his folks; he's even said the M word. There's nothing I can't say to him, no subject too taboo for us to broach.

Well, except perhaps one thing: I can't stop thinking about you. You, my last one-night stand, before the one-night-stand-that-turned-into-a-relationship. See, I didn't know it then, but it was the last time I had casual sex with a complete stranger. And I remember thinking, when we were done, that it was good. In my mind, now that I know it might have been my last fling, my last chance sexual encounter, I feel like it may have been better than good. In my imagination and memory, it's gone from good to awesome. To mind-blowing sex. To epic, once-in-a-lifetime sex that can never be repeated. Unless, of course, I have another last fling, another chance sexual encounter, with someone like you.

Don't get me wrong: sex with the love of my life is great. He's kinky in his own way, loves pulling on my hair when he's entering me from behind; whispers dirty nothings in my ear when I'm about to climax; slides his fingers through my clothes to touch my ass when we're walking around the city. But no matter how dirty and exciting it is in that moment, it's still him – it always feels familiar. I know him. I know too much about him. I know how he feels about his parents, that he adores his nieces and nephews, that he is a hand-holder, that he's sharp and intelligent and witty, an all-around great guy, who would never do anything to hurt me.

And therein lies my problem. I've had sex with way too many strangers in my life, each one of them the result of sizzling chemistry and too much vodka/tequila/Old Monk. I'm addicted to

that heady feeling, to the first date, to the suspense (will you or won't you?), to mystery (look at your hands, could your cock be that big?), that first tingling touch (god, your fingers are so cold on my back), that first knowing smile (you're undressing me with your eyes, you're staring at my breasts, oh god my nipples are getting hard and you can tell!), to that first big move (want to come over for a nightcap?). And to all the moments that follow that are firsts: the first kiss (so important to be forceful and confident and have technique and not be slobbery); the first time your fingers go into prohibited territory (sneaking up my legs and then my thighs); that first real touch (between my legs that sends a shiver through me)... The entire experience is hopeful. I'm praying that those moments keep coming, that every move you make intrigues me, that your change in positions surprises me. I wonder at your lust and energy and which part of me most turns you on – my soft skin or my long hair or my oozing cleavage in the tight red dress. I hope you'll tell me in so many words as you kiss me and unzip your jeans, when I see your briefs struggling to contain you, and then, when, finally, after all that drama, I see all of you for the first time.

Yup, all that drama is gone with my one true love. I know his touch, his cock, his hair. And it's all wonderful. But I know it. It keeps getting better. But that element of the completely unknown, that audacity of hope, it's simply not there. Is this what life feels like for married men? And married women? Are you happy but not excited, not at the edge of your seat, not feeling that mad rush of adrenaline, like anything could happen next? It's an addictive feeling, and if – like me – you've been on a steady diet of casual sex, this monogamy thing is nice, but it doesn't substitute for the other thing. The real thing. It's like smoking an electric cigarette. Or eating an eggless brownie. Or drinking a Diet Coke or a virgin Bloody Mary or something else that's fine if you don't know what the real stuff feels like.

So, yes, I'm hopelessly in love. Truly, madly, deeply. But that small voice in my head is still thinking of you – you, the stranger I met last year, or the stranger I'll meet tonight, or the stranger I'll meet six months from now who makes me weak in the knees and makes me wonder if your cock will match your hands and what briefs you're wearing under your jeans and if your fingertips are warm or cool. That voice in my head that's aching for epic, once-in-a-lifetime sex, drama, mystery, intrigue, surprise. So, if you spot a girl in a bar wearing a ring on her finger and she smiles at you, take the chance. Lead me to temptation. ☺

Chastity Fernandes often shows up to work post lunch hour, sporting bed head



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184

FAIR AND FOWL

BY ANISH TRIVEDI

WHEN YOU'RE ABROAD,
TRY IT ALL

The young lady next to me is not happy. She scowls. She frets. She mutters, not quite as *sotto voce* as she might think, about the sexual proclivities of visa officers. I ask her gently if I can help in any way. "I doubt it," she snorts. "This damned consulate won't give my cook a visa." Ah, I nod sagely. A Good Samaritan. Here to help her domestic help get that long-dreamed-for dollar-paying job in a foreign country. Loud and clear this time, she questions my intelligence, my parentage and my preference for farm animals as sexual partners. "No, you idiot," she concludes, "I want him to cook for me while we spend a month in Europe."

But this is Europe we're talking about, I point out. Home of the Michelin stars. Birthplace of Auguste Escoffier, Paul Bocuse, Nigella Lawson. Why does she need her cook? She snorts again. Gordon Ramsay may swear all he likes, she says, but can he make an effing paratha? I am still searching my memory for an episode in which he might have, but the young lady is long gone by then.

Alas, she's not the only one who craves the flavours of home cooking while spending her time on the slopes of Switzerland or in the boutiques on Bond Street. Every traveller has tales of being next to someone on a flight who eschewed the airline meal in favour of home-made theplas and pickle. My parents say they saw all of Barcelona in a way they never otherwise would have, walking up and down its streets in the Seventies looking for the one vegetarian restaurant the city claimed to have.

For my part, I made the mistake of being in Cuba with two vegetarians. Cuba is a country that prides itself on its prowess in a number of things. Medical services. Cigars. Rum. But let's face it: Dal chawal is not one of them. In Viñales, we finally found a vegetarian restaurant. The one good thing about it was that the food was plentiful. The downside was that it

took that much longer to finish everything. I mean, just how many ways can you cook the same root vegetables? Fortunately, there was plenty of another thing the Cubans do well: Beer.

I've had to go through the root vegetable thing in other places too. On my earlier trips to Scotland, I'd make the mistake of saying I didn't eat seafood. Bring on the beef, is what I meant. Slaughter the sheep, rack the lamb. Instead, my first few courses, while others around me were forking in the salmon and scallops, were three sprigs of green fern and a cherry tomato. That happened twice. Since then, my strategy is simple. Eat the damn salmon.

Don't get me wrong: I have nothing against vegetarian food. My diet is predominantly vegetarian, by happenstance. I just think there are places where you can eat the stuff, and places where you're better off with a bag of potato chips and some salsa.

Not that wanting your steak can be such a joy, either. Halfway through a particularly fine fillet cooked perfectly bleu in Burgundy, I discovered that my fillet had previously been a filly. "Horse meat. Delicious, no?" asked my host genially. I must admit, had he not been so forthcoming with his information, I would have had to agree. But a childhood spent prancing on ponies at the Riders' Club brought up visions of poor Lucky Girl now lying on the plate in front of me. Fortunately my host had just opened another bottle of wine, so I did the right thing. I drank my dinner instead.

In Florida, on the other hand, the only thing next to my plate was a can of Coors. On the plate: deep-fried alligator. People will tell you it tastes like chicken. It sort of does.

But like a chicken that's been brought up entirely on a diet of fish.

Down south, outside Coimbatore, you'll come across signs for an emu farm. I've yet to see the meat on shelves in India, but should you get any, you'll find yourself eating a bird that tastes like beef. It's lean, low on cholesterol and looks exactly like a rare steak when it's set in front of you.

For years we've complained about the English, the Americans, their cooking and their proclivity for the familiar when it comes to food abroad. We are no different, though, looking for the nearest tandoori place in distant cities even though it's probably run by a bunch of Bangladeshis who've never heard of the Punjab. Broaden the mind, say I. Try it all. You might just learn to like something new. Like me and fish, although in all fairness, in Scotland that comes drowned in a generous dram of whisky. Apart from emu, alligator and horse, I've also had my share of ostrich, crocodile, snake and hippopotamus. I do draw the line at dog, though. It's personal. I don't pat a chicken on the head every time I come home. ☺

Anish Trivedi is the author of *Call Me Dan*

FOR YEARS WE'VE COMPLAINED ABOUT THE ENGLISH, THE AMERICANS, THEIR COOKING AND THEIR PROCLIVITY FOR THE FAMILIAR WHEN IT COMES TO FOOD ABROAD. WE ARE NO DIFFERENT, LOOKING FOR THE NEAREST TANDOORI PLACE IN DISTANT CITIES. BROADEN THE MIND, SAY I



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WATCHING THE CROWN

As unlikely as it may seem in a system that thrives on playing it safe, personal connections, even nepotism, Bollywood's next Khan might just turn out to be a Rajput

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WATCH BY
MICHAEL KORS



JUMPER, TROUSERS:
BOTH BY **ETRO**. SANDALS
BY **CORNELIANI**. BAG BY
BOTTEGA VENETA

N

ot since Shah Rukh Khan has a TV actor grown so successfully, so quickly, into the hot light of movie stardom. This is what he tells me. It's a pretty bold statement, considering the subject of this platitude is himself, but Sushant Singh Rajput insists that it's true.

"I mean, there have been attempts," he clarifies, "but only attempts... There is a strong prejudice against TV actors [in Bollywood]."

"But since him," I repeat, "no one's really done it, except for you?"

"No one."

Sushant hadn't even hit puberty when Shah Rukh made that till-now unmatched transition of format 20 years ago, but today, barely two years after his big-screen debut in *Kai Po Che*, this shy, sheltered kid from Patna has his own dressing room on the lot of the legendary Yash Raj Studios in Mumbai.

"You know," chuckles the 29-year-old, easing back into the puffy cushions of his chair, "I came here to YRS so many times as a back-up dancer. In this very studio, I used to dance behind so many stars, and I used to tell myself, 'One day, they'll have a room for me here.'"

And here he is, his personalized nameplate outside room 103, already having scored roles like playing MS Dhoni in the cricket legend's biopic, holding down the lead for Dibakar Banerjee in *Detective Byomkesh Bakshy!* and, though it was a small part, appearing in the highest-grossing Hindi film of all time, *PK*. To which he recalls his preferred Stanislavski quote: "There are no small roles, only small actors."

Contemplating all this, he laughs. A lot. And it's infectious. Whether his boisterousness comes from nerves, embarrassment or a diabolical disbelief in his good fortune, he's not faking it. But aside from jokes about Bollywood nepotism, frumpy Delhiites and how he wants to preserve the memories of hometown Patna by never visiting again – and how he and his three college buddies, now also in Mumbai, are a little too much like the cast of *Entourage* – we just can't seem to shake the shadow of Shah Rukh Khan.

"Where did you study theatre?" I ask at one point.

"The Barry John theatre group, same as Shah Rukh." Or later, when I ask, "Did you have a kind of Eureka moment where you thought, 'Yes, I've really made it now?'" Sushant gives a three-tiered answer, regaling me with a story about how Shah Rukh had been too busy to sign an autograph on a set in 2004, not knowing Sushant was dancing behind him on an awards-show stage in 2006, and the two finally being united this year, to do what people do these days – take a selfie and throw it up on Twitter.

"Was it a fanboy moment for you?" I ask.

"Yes," beams Sushant, "I couldn't hide my enthusiasm. He's the guy that everyone wants to be."

Neither can Sushant resist grinning, as we're saying goodbye in the hallway, guiding my eye to the nameplate of the dressing room right next to his. When he sees me register that room 104 is assigned to Shah Rukh Khan, he busts up laughing.

"Sorry," he says, "when I'm not acting on stage or for the camera, I'm a really bad actor."

**"IN THIS
VERY STUDIO,
I USED TO
TELL MYSELF,
'ONE DAY,
THEY'LL
HAVE A
ROOM FOR
ME HERE'"**



HE LAUGHS, A LOT, CONTEMPLATING
HOW HE AND HIS THREE COLLEGE
BUDDIES ARE A BIT TOO MUCH LIKE
THE CAST OF ENTOURAGE

A full-page photograph of a man in a white suit. He is standing on a balcony with ornate railings, looking off to the side. The background shows a building with classical architecture and a lamp post. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day.

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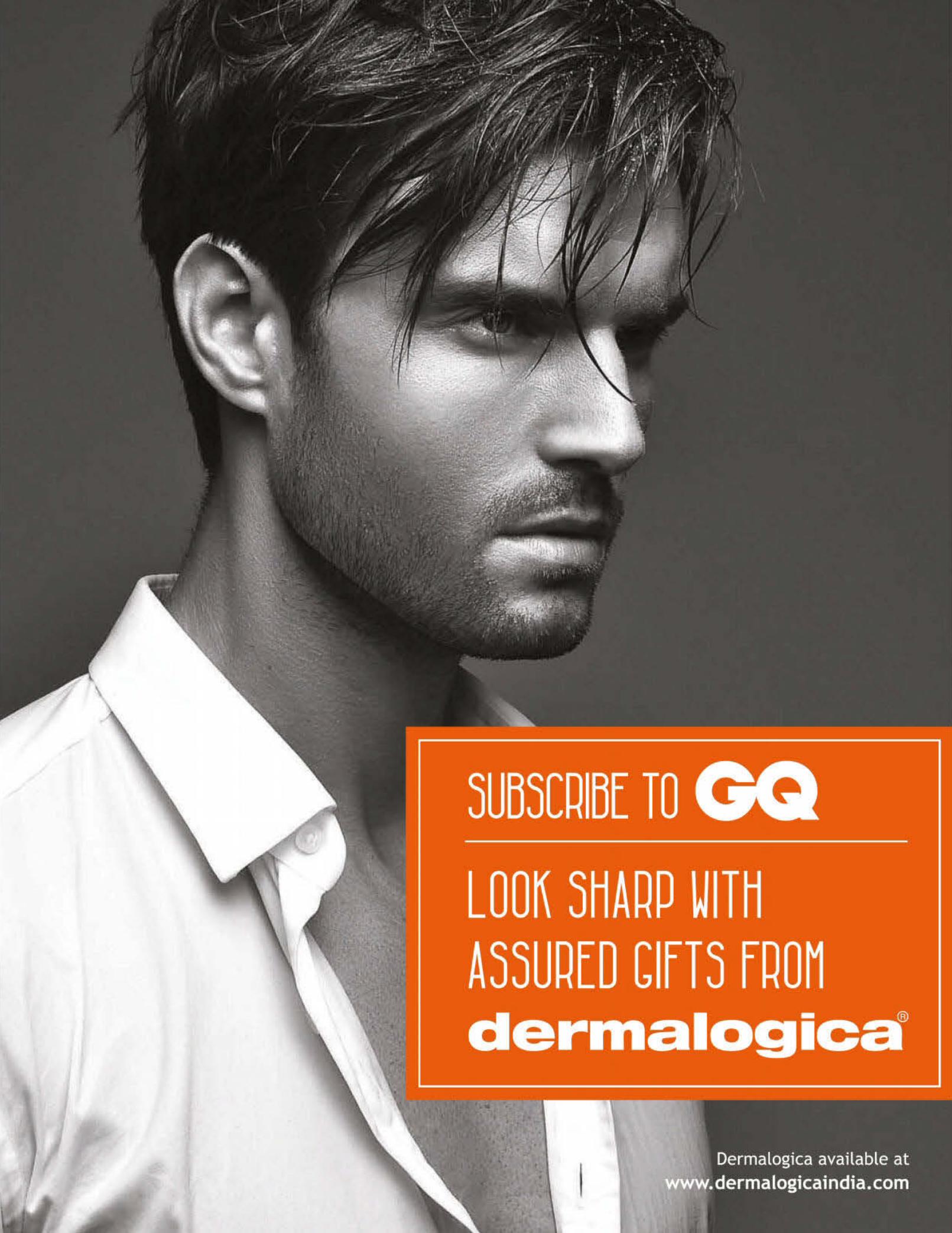
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THE GENTLEMEN'S CLUB



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What do you get when you throw fêted swimwear-design duo **Shivan & Narresh**, fashion legend **David Abraham** and India's hardest-working DJ, **Su Real**, into a room and then ask them a bunch of overly personal questions? A bit of everything, really. But what connects our eclectic ensemble of gentlemen is this: do what you want to do with your life, no matter how weird it may seem to other people. It might end up working out in the end

If you could go back to any period in history, which would it be?

ABRAHAM: Can I say that I'd rather not have lived in the past at all? I'm perfectly happy in the present.

Sure. But why?

ABRAHAM: I don't know anything else. That's why. Looking back is something I just never do. But I would love to have the time that I used to have to read. I used to spend hours reading, days reading, but now that's all gone. That, I would love to get back.

SHIVAN: I wasn't into reading at all, pictures are really what mattered to me, so when I'd go through magazines I just saw images, images, images.

NARRESH: I miss my time in art school, my art labs. I was a graphic student so I used to do a lot of screen printing, be up all night just doing screens or developing prints. It's that part of my life that always inspires me. In the future, I'd like to get back to this art, where I just lose my sense of time.

SU REAL: I don't know, man. I guess I'd just like my innocence back.

[Laughter]

SU REAL: I don't mean like my virginity or anything. I'm just thinking like, these days I see all these younger kids making music and they're so wide-eyed, you know? I used to be that way, when everything was new, and when you found out about a new kind of music you felt so good that it existed, especially if you grew up in India or Asia. I have so many conversations with younger people these days, they're so excited about the world and the things that can happen, and I'm just so jaded. ☀



From left to right:
David Abraham, Narresh,
Shivan, Su Real



Do you think that would change if you could choose another career?

SU REAL: Dunno. Probably not. But I'm totally fascinated by how the brain works, as well as biological history, where we come from, you know? Not just as different races of people but as a species. Like, where did consciousness come from? I find myself in my older age being interested in these kinds of topics more than anything else.

ABRAHAM: Maybe I could be a writer? I enjoy writing, but I do find it to be very hard work, so maybe if I could also have an alternative career, then I might be interested in being a writer.

NARRESH: Me? So many, actually. I'd love to be an architect, a writer. I love documenting stuff, I love it as much as I love writing.

SHIVAN: I think my dad saw that I could get into interior design or architecture, but although I thought architecture sounded easy, it's actually not.

SHIVAN



"I SEE ALL THESE YOUNG KIDS MAKING MUSIC, AND THEY'RE SO EXCITED ABOUT THE WORLD"



SU REAL

If you could bring one person back from the dead, who would it be?

SU REAL: I would rather not bring anyone back from the dead, have you watched any of these fucking zombie movies?

[Laughter]

SU REAL: No, really, it gets dangerous, because first you bring one back, then they get hungry, they bite someone and bring another back. It gets out of control really easily.

ABRAHAM: If I could bring somebody back from the dead? You know, it's not a question I've ever thought about before.

NARRESH: Only people, or can we bring back animals?

Free-form psychology, man.

NARRESH: Yeah? OK. Then I'd love to bring back all my old pets. I've had three dogs that died.

SU REAL: Zombie dogs.

SHIVAN: You know, for the sake of making my life slightly more complex, I think I'd have my dad back. It would be quite nice for him to see how things are going now and I would love to know his point of view. He was very fond of giving his point of view.

[Laughter]

Alright, let's shift gears. If you could get one plastic surgery procedure, what would it be?

SU REAL: One plastic surgery procedure? I don't know. I've been through a lot of ridicule at school, and even in my adult life there've been people, including ex-girlfriends, that suggested at times that I should spend some money and fix myself. I've always persisted in not doing that because I think there's so much more to life and the world. I think it's great for people who've been through horrible accidents and horrible experiences, and it would be great if plastic surgeons would focus on that shit, but otherwise...

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ABRAHAM: Honestly, I wouldn't mind a little more hair. And if it keeps going and I could get a transplant, I would go for it.

Considering that you guys design ladies' swimwear, you must come across this issue fairly regularly.

SHIVAN: You know what? Most of our clients are very old.

NARRESH: It's true.

[Laughter]

Oh! Sorry. I'm a bit embarrassed.

SHIVAN: No, no. Don't worry about it.

OK. Appreciate it. So, apart from tonight, when was the last time you seriously embarrassed yourself in public?

SU REAL: I don't know, I'm always doing embarrassing things. The trick is to just ignore it, or I don't know, maybe people are more embarrassed by me than me being embarrassed by myself.

OK, OK. We'll figure that out later. David?

ABRAHAM: When I spat on one of my hosts at a diplomatic reception.

[Laughter]

ABRAHAM: My mouth was full of Coke, somebody said something very silly, I just couldn't control it and Coke just exploded all over the diplomat's jacket. My god, you know? I was invited to their home and spat Coke on them. Terrible.

SHIVAN: I remember once, I don't even know why it's still in my head, but Narresh and I were at his family's for dinner. My family is usually very serious at dinner, like very military-style eating, so at one point I reach my hand forward to get some food, and I was so nervous, I don't even know why, but my hand goes into

NARRESH



DAVID
ABRAHAM

his uncle's plate and I'm picking up his fish curry and the whole family is looking at me.

Is this accurate?

NARRESH: Yes. This is exactly how it happened. And as for me, I'm a very zoned-out guy, I don't remember names, I don't remember people. I live in my own little cocoon in my head, so at times it gets very embarrassing, especially when I have to respond very quickly to a situation.

I think I see where this is going.

NARRESH: Well, I'm not going to name names, but Shivan and I had just started our career in fashion, and we were on the cover of a magazine. And that magazine has one of the most loved editors around. I personally love her, everyone loves her, there is no question about it. So anyway, she was kind enough to invite us to an official evening and it just so happened we were the first ones to arrive, copies of the magazine were everywhere, and as I enter she comes out to greet me.

Uh-oh.

NARRESH: And I had just recently met her too. She says, "Hey, how are you guys? Blah blah", and I was like "Hey, hi!" and then I just said, "I'm so sorry, I don't know who you are." And he was kicking me.

[Shivan laughs]

NARRESH: She didn't speak to me for a couple of months after that. ☺



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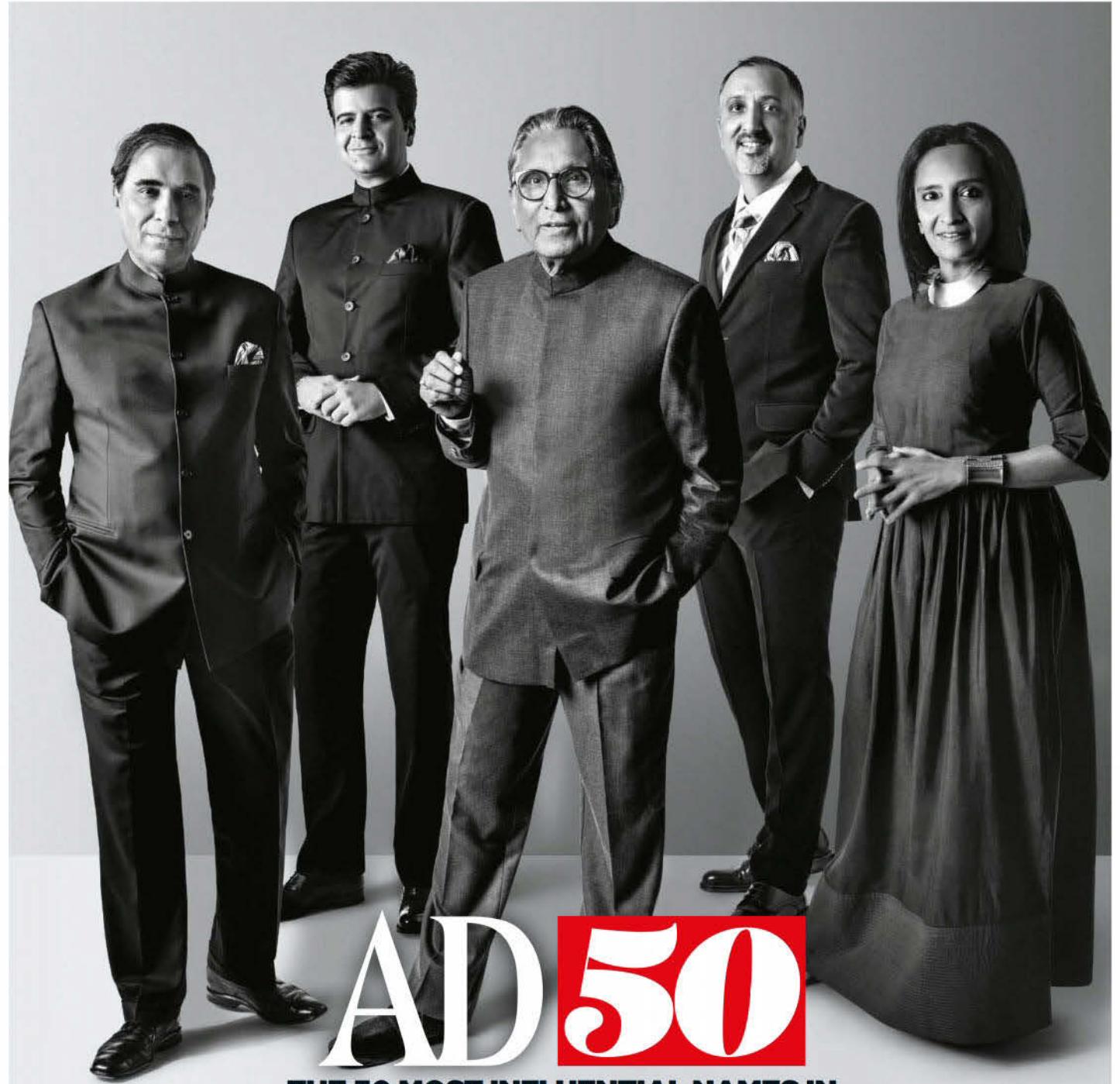
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The Bling Dynasty

You probably know that people are getting rich in China. They lag only behind America in sheer number of billionaires. And you probably know that all of that money is new. But do you know what the hundreds of billionaires (and tens of thousands of millionaires) are going to do with their money? Well, neither do they! Lucky for them, there is an army of Western luxury-lifestyle purveyors coming to teach them how to act rich. **Devin Friedman** ventures to China to partake in a gaudy crash course in the centuries-old art of snobbery

T

his past summer, a fleet of private planes was dispatched throughout the vast north of China. At airports in the coalfields of Jilin and the industrial centres of Hebei and the other industrial centres of Liaoning and the other coalfields of Gansu, Gulfstreams and Airbus business jets touched down to collect the ultra-rich of China and their entourages before tipping wing flaps and taking off again for the industrial city of Dalian, way out there on the eastern edge of the world.

These people were not merely wealthy. We're talking dislocating, alien, dehumanizing amounts of money – the kind of stratospheric wealth that seems inevitably to propel people into a kind of post-geographic realm. At this level of wealth, you're not really a citizen of Baku or Hamburg or Pacific Palisades or whatever the location of your birth; the only people you have anything meaningful in common with are other people who are also that wealthy, people you meet at the private airports and luxury boutiques and resorts and the better yacht clubs of the world, citizens of a kind of nationless, concierged realm we can call Yachtland. By this logic, China is sending more people to Yachtland than any other nation in the world.

The problem with China, though, is that there exists almost zero in the way of native Yachtland infrastructure. There are precious few private airports, no James Bond-style Monte Carlo casinos, no Portofino-esque towns populated only by people who smell of Acqua di Parma, and there is literally only a single yacht club at which a Russian oligarch or an Italian real estate

magnate would feel at all comfortable. I even visited the most exclusive public riding stable in Beijing in search of Yachtland but found only a walled compound out near the airport called the Equuleus International Riding Club that I would have taken to be some kind of cucumber farm/orthodontia-manufacture centre, were it not for the stadium-sized Bentley ads that were festooned all over the place. (It should be noted that the Bentley ads featured cobblestone streets and castle-y places that called to mind an image of Yachtland, only further highlighting the fact that Yachtland was nowhere near here.)

While more than a dozen billionaires and hundreds of millionaires were en route to Dalian, a micro-class of expat Europeans had converged on the city and were already here, putting the finishing touches on a little outpost of Yachtland they'd built out on a vast new municipal marina. It looked not unlike a United Nations tent city, except that at the centre of it was a "beach polo" pitch and dozens of yachts, plus some Aston Martins and Ferraris and stuff. It had been constructed for an event held over a long weekend last summer called "SO! Dalian", which you can think of as a kind of orgiastic ultra-luxury pop-up shop. Many of these European expats were here to sell yachts of the mega-, ultra- and holy-shit variety, and on the first morning of the event they were already gathering in the main tent, which had been chilled to the temperature of a package of grocery-store chicken thighs. Little Frenchmen in tiny fitted blazers and driving mocs, mustachioed Germans in pink pants, macho beaming Italians named Giordano. A tanned little tribe that had pulled →





Today I'm going to sell a motherfucker an \$80 million boat, whether they want it or not

up stakes in the Old World in order to dedicate themselves to selling super-extra-perversely-expensive vessels to people on the other side of the globe who have a reputation of being kind of scared of the ocean and have no idea what these yacht salesmen are talking about half the time.

A lot of these yacht salesmen – Paul Blanc, here for the tall-masted French sailboat company Beneteau; Michael Breman, representing Lürssen, a German company that builds \$600 million yachts with custom-made motorcycle elevators for people like Paul Allen and Roman Abramovich – seemed to approach their jobs with a kind of knowing, world-weary bemusement, like private investigators in noir novels. But not Traugott Kaminski, yacht salesman for Sanlorenzo. Traugott's vibe was a little different. I think monomaniacal is the right word. Traugott: native of Hannover and resident of Hong Kong, a man who calls himself the Godfather of Yachts. He stood that first morning at the boat slip and barked orders at his crew – his white shirt pressed, his complicated “architectural” eyeglasses polished, his hair cinched back into a limp fusilli of ponytail – looking like a man who could burn ants on the sidewalk with only his eyes. It was a look that said: Today I'm going to sell a motherfucker an \$80 million boat with leather flooring and a Jacuzzi on the flybridge, whether they want it or not.

He was super keen on showing me how he'd kitted out his spec boat – a 96-foot gleaming wedge of white fibreglass and smoked glass bobbing before us – to suit his clientele. The industrial laundry machines, the champagne glass-chilling shelves, the showers specially made for men to bathe with their mistresses, the shrunk-down cabins because Chinese don't like to spend the night on their boats. Traugott told me he goes the extra mile. On board, he introduced me to a cast of extras he'd hired to give his craft that

Yachtland feel: I met a Ukrainian woman named Yulia – she had to have been six feet tall and never took off her sunglasses, day or night – who would dispense gold-flecked champagne and caviar to prospective buyers; I met a Chinese man named Kenny from Shanghai who would provide a selection of “vintage” cigars.

“SO! Dalian” was a rare and valuable event because the hyper-rich of China are hardly ever in the same place at the same time. These men (they are almost entirely male) are figures of intense fascination if you happen to sell yachts, or anything expensive, or want to fund a company. You could argue they’re the most important figures in our contemporary global economy. And since many of them had never been even to a simulation of Yachtland, this weekend they would begin to be educated about the world they might someday inhabit. I figured Traugott, renowned for his networking, might be able to introduce me to some of these guys, and so I asked him.

He gave me a cursory look that made me feel as if I were being reduced to cold data. He would allow only that there were several clients he was excited to see. I asked him what they did, and he said, “Business.” I asked him where they lived, and he said, “Northern China.” He did get excited when he talked about one potential customer, a whale. The Whale of Whales, as Traugott made it sound. This guy was ready to pull the trigger on a boat this very weekend. What’s his name? I asked. Would he like to be interviewed?

Traugott almost laughed. “I cannot tell you my potential customers. I have to hide them. I must sell first the boat.” And that was all he would say, turning away to inspect the karaoke room in the main cabin.

Jn 2004, there were three billionaires on the Hurun list of Chinese billionaires. (The Hurun and *Forbes* lists are the gold standards when it comes to counting rich Chinese people.) Today there are 354 Chinese billionaires on that list – 388 if you include the billionaires in Hong Kong. There are also 60,000 Chinese people worth at least \$200 million – another line of demarcation between being wealthy and being a photon cannon of currency.

Now, America is still No 1 in billionaires with 492. Fuck yeah, America, etc. But Rupert Hoogewerf, the Luxembourg-born man behind the Hurun list, estimated for *GQ* that even given their relative economic slowdown, the Chinese would overtake us in billionaires in two years. He also said that for every billionaire Hurun knows about in China, they suspect there’s another one they don’t. “Some of them we don’t know about because their wealth is new or they live somewhere remote, and some of them are secretive because they’re government officials or what have you,” Rupert said. But in a world of profound income stagnation (the median income in America is essentially the same as it was 15 years ago), in a world where more and more money is being concentrated in the hands of the hyper-rich and where most of the hyper-rich have already established their spending patterns and taste preferences – not to mention parked their capital in the banks and companies of their choice – you could argue that the new and soon-to-be billionaires of China are the most important market in the world. If you want to sell things like, say, mega-yachts, China represents close to 100 per cent of your potential growth market. →





The problem is that Chinese people have not yet learned what the world expects your lifestyle to be when you're a billionaire.

"They don't like the sun," one of the many European yacht salesmen I met in Dalian said. "They wear ridiculous bathing costumes. They are afraid of the water. If you go to a Chinese beach, during the day, the beach is empty. You can have it all to yourself. They come out only at sunset to take photos of each other. These are the stereotypes."

At this point, people who buy yachts here aren't buying them because, for instance, they enjoy them. Consider that the largest yacht in China was bought in 2012 at another of the "SO!" events, this one down on the resort island of Hainan in the south. It was 146 feet long, and it was purchased on the spot for an estimated \$45 million. Rumour has it that the owner has never taken the boat out once since he bought it. "He doesn't leave the marina," another yacht executive, this one French, told me. "He comes to the boat, sits in a chair and fishes off the side. Then he goes back and sleeps in his villa."

But let's review one fact here: Ten years ago, there were three billionaires in China. And now there are at least 350 – 350 billionaires and 60,000 200-millionaires in a nation where 20 years ago there was essentially nothing fancy to buy!

"They have no idea how to spend it," Geoffrey Ravoire, one of the people who ran the "SO! Dalian" event, told me. That's where the "SO!" people come in, as they see it: They don't just put rich people and yacht companies together; they provide a kind of public service – instructions on lifestyle – for the super-rich. Delphine Lignières, the founder of the event, put it this way as we sat in the VVIP tent and drank rum drinks: "We try to give the message to stop and enjoy," she said. "We try to teach them to have experiences."



K, so this is something I really didn't want to find funny: four Chinese women in cocktail dresses trying to pronounce *foie gras*. Because really, that's a tough thing for anyone to pronounce. But still, you listen to people shouting "frah grah" and see if you don't have to take some time to do a little personal reckoning. This was the week before the Dalian event, when I spent time at an etiquette school in Beijing called Institute Sarita. Here, women receive instruction in such courses as "Introduction to the Noble Sports", "Pronunciation of Luxury Brands", "British Afternoon Tea", "Lingerie Lesson" and, naturally, "Introduction to French Cuisine", where we might learn how to pronounce things like *foie gras*. The course lasts for 12 days, costs about \$15,000 and books up months in advance. The school meets in an apartment in the tony Sanlitun Diplomatic Residence Compound that the school's owner and chief instructor, Sara Jane Ho, rents for this purpose.

Sara Jane is from Hong Kong and attended Exeter, Georgetown, Harvard Business School and a finishing school in Switzerland upon which the institute is modelled. She is 29 years old and drives a murdered-out little Audi coupé and often wears her hair in a halo of braids. She begins each morning with either a brisk swim at a luxury hotel or horse-jumping at a friend's

private stable. She looks like a woman whom James Bond sleeps with even though she has a death ray in her mountaintop midcentury-modern home that she has aimed at civilization. I think she's aware of this: She has framed on her wall a page from Chinese *Cosmopolitan* magazine in which she is wearing a short red dress and holding a red leather riding crop. It's impossible to be in her company for more than 17 seconds without apprehending that she comes from superior breeding. It registers instantly in her posture as she sits on the edge of her French sofa ("All of my furniture is custom-ordered from Paris"), in the way her knees are pressed together and ratcheted a few degrees away from centre, in the distant, immutable pleasantness of her facial expression. I've never met a more pleasant person. There's also something irresistibly horrifying about the total control she has over herself at every moment. Like, one amazing thing I saw Sara Jane Ho do was slowly peel and eat a banana using only a knife and fork, an exercise in flatware surgery her students were meant to try their hand at afterwards. We watched her sit erectly in her French dining chair as first she wounded the thing with English cutlery, severing it down its length and unzipping a flap to reveal the fruit, which she consumed with extraordinary forbearance, replacing the flap over the deflated thing, the pleasant smile never leaving her face. None of us could do it like she did, with that unbearable restraint. I believe there are people on the internet who would pay to watch Sara Jane Ho do what she did to that banana.

On the morning I attended, there were four students: three hostesses – Lucy, Lucy and Laura, all in their forties or fifties – and Doris, a string bean of a 16-year-old who'd been flown in from Shenzhen by her parents and put up at a five-star hotel to take the course. I watched them take a class in flower arrangement and another on setting the table. For the table-setting lesson, the three hostesses and Doris donned white cotton gloves like attendants at a fine-jewellery store and measured the distance between forks with a ruler. In the afternoon, a make-up artist came to show them how to apply their make-up tastefully.

"In China," Sara Jane said when I asked why it was necessary to train Chinese women in the application of make-up, "especially among the nouveau riche, people put on a lot of make-up. I don't know if you've noticed. People go out for dinner to a simple hot-pot place and their hair is like *bam*, and they're wearing a crazy Chanel suit, red lips like *vroom*. It's almost kind of scary."

Before lunch was when they did French cuisine. I'm not going to tell you I didn't have a kind of out-of-body experience watching Laura yell *frah grah, frah grah, frah grah!* I am not going to say that I didn't turn to an imaginary camera and give the imaginary (American) audience a kind of jaw-drop look. People love it when a stereotype is fulfilled. There may not be a happier moment for a traveller than when French people act like super-haughty French people or when an Italian sweats at you with his hands while riding a motor scooter with his mom on the back – you think, Wow, now I'm really in Italy!

Later, I asked Sara Jane what kinds of people come to take her class.

"It's only for people who have a high-end social need," she said. "It sounds snobbish. And look, everyone should have manners. But I can't be everything to everyone. I want to train ladies."

I was also interested in the concept of "noble sports". Namely, which noble sports are trendy in China right now?

"The first wave of rich sports was golf," she said. "And it's old now.

Everybody and their mother plays golf now. To say, Oh, I'm learning golf, it's not exciting. Equestrian is really where it is. It's the next thing, and you're just starting to see the wave now."

I asked her why, given that China was designed by Mao to be a kind of post-class society, her clients think it's so important to learn the skills she teaches.

"Chinese are rich now," she says. "But I tell my students all the time, being a world leader doesn't just depend on your bank account. It's about social and cultural leadership, and that's why my clients are coming." So it's not about joining a kind of society?

"China doesn't have a 'society,'" she said. "It's not like New York or London or even Hong Kong, where you know one rich person and you know them all. In China, you have all this random wealth from random cities. Some random person has three factories in the south, and he buys a Rolls-Royce. But there's no society. The only reason they know each other is because private banks have events and they meet each other that way."

Jf you had to go to the bathroom at "SO! Dalian", you had to leave the tented city of Yachtland and hit the porta-potties out by the seawall. It was a jarring transition. In front of you, across the marina, was a half-built replica of Venice, complete with deep canals lined by ornate stone buildings, that was itself set before an even more bizarre tableau: a massive swath of totally graded-out dirt. Like a god-sized blind spot backing straight up to the mountains. Dalian is a city of six million on the Korea Bay known for its warm-water port and for being one of many large Chinese cities Americans have never heard of. It boasts a standard downtown with a skyline of generic glass skyscrapers and streets teeming with traffic. But "SO! Dalian" wasn't held there; it was held here, where an entire second downtown, with, like, 50 skyscrapers and hundreds of smaller

"Gulfstream sent a plane to where I live, just for my friends and me"



buildings, was going to be built all at once. It made the event, if you happened to wander outside the tented luxury village, feel as if it were taking place in the future. Even the name "SO! Dalian" sounded futuristic. It's like a post-English patois imported from a not-too-distant future when English is mostly used to make something sound fancier.

Over the four days of the "SO! Dalian" event, there was lots to see and learn. The company Vladi Private Islands gave a tutorial on how to buy your own private island. (Best to go through Vladi Private Islands, turns out.) Some other attendees claimed they'd heard a talk about how to get an American passport simply by parking half a million dollars in a US bank. You could watch the stunning women of Kazakhstan take on the stunning women of Palm Beach in the "beach polo championships" while approximately three people watched, none of whom seemed to realize that there isn't really any such thing as "beach polo championships". There was some good people-watching, too. No one seemed certain what the dress code for something like this was. One man – identified later as worth several hundred million dollars – had on a kind of orange nylon Louis Vuitton mock turtleneck and what might have been welding glasses. I saw a woman wearing a human-sized beer cozy making a dream-vacation wish at the dream-vacation booth sponsored by a local bank. I saw beautiful women with silk umbrellas, and a grandmother sucking on a fried fish like it was a lollipop. I watched as a yacht company official forcibly removed an old man from a boat before it took a cruise because he was merely a "guest" and not even a "VIP"; he watched that boat disappear into the fish-coloured murk with his fists clenched, crying hot tears of humiliation. On another day, at the Gaggenau VIP tent, I saw a man with a faux-hawk, a tailored suit and a porkpie hat and wondered what his story was – maybe he was a billionaire? Later that day, I opened the door to a porta-potty out near the seawall, and staring back at me was the same man, his feet on the toilet seat, his fine suit pants around his ankles and a cigarette clenched between his teeth. He was swiping at a Samsung phablet. There was not the slightest embarrassment in his eyes when he asked if I wouldn't mind shutting the door, or at least that is what I think he said, because I don't speak the language. We never saw each other again.

A lot of the action seemed to be located in the Gulfstream tent. The private-plane market is way more advanced than the yacht market. One afternoon, I met a fellow named Yan Zhenhua exiting the tent. Mr Yan hailed from Fujian Province and, that day, was in head-to-toe Burberry – plaid golf shirt with plaid-accented chinos. I asked him why he'd come to the event, and he told me he'd just ordered a G280, which can be had for between \$20 million and \$30 million.

"Gulfstream sent a plane to where I live," he said. "The plane was just for my friends and me. Six of us came."

Where did you come by your fortune? I asked. "I have many gas stations," Mr Yan said. "I started with my own money, so I come from zero." →





And why do you want a plane? I asked.

“Because I like it. My friends have one, so I tried it and I love it. Once you have a plane, you will have more friends. And people will see I’m successful, and it will be good for business.”

I asked him if he’d ever heard the term *tuhao*, which is colloquial Mandarin for “nouveau riche”. It translates roughly to “money from the country”.

“Yes,” he said, smiling at me. “I am *tuhao*. Who isn’t *tuhao*? There was no money in China 20 years ago!”

When we parted ways, I went over to hang out at the little Airbus chill lounge. It was mostly empty, as it usually was; the Airbus guy said that the Chinese were followers – everyone bought Gulfstreams because their friends had them. No one wanted to be the first guy to buy a different kind of plane. Plus, not many people can afford an Airbus. “I don’t want to talk to anyone unless they have a billion dollars,” he said. “Otherwise they can’t afford it. I will maybe talk to two good potential customers over four days.”

Jt was the Airbus guy who, on the second-to-last night of the event, invited me to sit at his table at the “SO! Dalian” gala dinner held at the Shangri-La hotel downtown. It was an invitation I’d been angling for, because another guest at this table would be the scion of a manufacturing magnate worth nearly a billion dollars. The son was here to go yacht shopping as a proxy for his father. I’d trailed him at a distance over the past few days as he listened to sales pitches aboard vessels owned by Sanlorenzo, Ferretti and Lürssen. I had as yet, however, been unable to speak with him, but I wanted to. I wanted to know what he thought, not just about the effort designed to crowbar him from his millions, but what it felt like to be a part of a grander, unintentional crypto-re-education effort. Did he believe that this event wasn’t just about yacht appreciation, but that it was designed to work the same kind of behaviour-modification tricks that Sara Jane Ho was providing for four ladies at a time up in Beijing? All these little Frenchmen with their cropped suits and sockless dress shoes sent as emissaries for Old World lifestyles; Traugott and the other men selling the yacht lifestyle; Torrey, a guy I’d met who was recruiting members for a new yacht club in China – weren’t all these people trying to create a Chinese “society” in their own, European image?

The Airbus guests stood around our table, mingling. Me, a couple of Chinese nationals who were specialists in whale networking for Airbus, two rich people who weren’t really rich enough to count (dolphins?), a lady in a short skirt whom I took to be a seat-filler. The Son-of-Whale wasn’t here yet. The Airbus guy and I chewed the fat for a minute. This is going to be funny, he told me in his

French-accented English, because Chinese people don’t go to shit like this; they don’t do cocktail hours where people stand around talking to strangers. At restaurants, wealthy Chinese people eat in private rooms, at big round tables, and dislike having to talk to people they don’t know. Then he said: watch what happens after the first course; that’s when things will start to get a little nutty. Just then the chandeliers went dim in the ballroom, and a beam of light as cold and blue as a diamond lit up the stage. A woman with a Spanish accent, dressed in a gown, got up and sang “Fly Me To The Moon”, which kicked off a raft of jazz standards. She didn’t get all the words right, but none of the people who were listening to her were native English speakers, anyway. They were delivering the first course – raw shrimp – when the manufacturing magnate’s son showed up and took his seat next to me. He was in his late twenties and had a college-y, untucked vibe, with a stylish mop of curly hair swung to one side and handsome horn-rimmed glasses. We shook hands, and he told me a little bit about himself. C (he asked me not to use his name) told me his father didn’t identify as rich: He still slept at the factory, still drove a Toyota, served ramen noodles on his private plane. So yes, he owned an Airbus business jet valued at more than a hundred million dollars, but that was recent. C hadn’t himself realized his father was one of the richest men in China until someone showed him the *Forbes* list when he was a freshman in college in Canada. I started to lay out my thesis for him, namely that all these advance men were here to condition the rich people in China to act like they’re supposed to. He agreed that buying a yacht in China had very little to do with enjoying yachts.

“The Chinese yachting lifestyle is about impressing your friends or bringing your little third [a colloquial term for “mistress”]; it’s about face,” he said, sucking the head out of a shrimp. Face is an important Chinese concept, which pertains to looking important in the world. “They will never bring their family or their own wife on the boat. Having family time and adventures and bonding – this isn’t important in China, in general.”

Waiters came to collect our first-course plates. Suddenly people





left our table and other people arrived. A woman in a business suit sat down next to us and wanted to toast. The Airbus guy nudged me: Watch, everyone's going to start switching tables now. As we talked, more people came and went, each asking to toast us. The Airbus guy explained that in China it's seen as super weird if you drink by yourself, so every time you want to take a swig of beer, you have to get someone to do it with you.

"We are learning the consumption life," C said later. "Nobody knows what to do when they become rich, so they just buy things mindlessly." I asked what motivated them, and he told me about guys who try to show off by buying Ferraris. "Oh man, Chinese people like showing off so bad! Ok, here's a story. Ferrari: How it works is, when you buy a Ferrari, you pay part of it up front, and they go and build you the car, and then, when they deliver it, you have to pay for the rest of it. My friend works for Ferrari. He said they make a car that's undeliverable every month. Someone orders a Ferrari to show off and can't pay for it every month!"

We ate for a while. Then C laughed to himself. "The problem," he said, "isn't the billionaires. It's the millionaires." That was kind of an awesome thing to say: Dude, you know who's ruining it for everyone with their crass bullshit? Those low-rent millionaires.

Already the germs of class are beginning to appear in a country in which all wealth is new. It's what Sara Jane Ho was talking about when she drew a distinction about the women who take her classes: "My clients are not the overnight-mushroom millionaires. They are not the people you see misbehaving abroad. People who just came into money are still trying to buy the Hermès bag. My clients were buying the Hermès bag ten years ago."

During dessert, another woman in a ball gown appeared in a beam of light on the stage at the Shangri-La. She led the crowd in a game: A slide would appear on a screen showing a beautiful beach from somewhere in the world, and we would have to guess where it was. Portofino! Cannes! Deauville! It was as if we were being shown flash cards to help us memorize the various territories of Yachtland. C watched for a while and then turned to me.

"If what you're asking is, Is this a tutorial about how to be a rich person?" C said as the woman showed a beach in Sardinia, "then, yes. These events are about the Chinese learning how to form an elite class."

The Whale of Whales was one of the last to arrive at Traugott's event-ending party for Sanlorenzo, on the next and final night of "SO! Dalian". And he arrived at just the right time: The party was reaching its simulation crescendo. Traugott had set some velvet ropes around the Sanlorenzo booth, his 96-foot spec yacht bobbing next to us like a prize poodle with its tongue wagging. The lights were up; there was a small crowded dance floor. He'd thought of everything. Yulia served dollops of caviar off the fillet of white flesh between thumb and forefinger. Kenny was smoking a big fat "vintage" cigar and stuffing more cigars into the wet mouths of other VIPs. There were some models who hailed from a province in the north where, I was told, all tall Chinese people come from. The owner of the French restaurant I'd met the night before at a dinner with the beach polo team, the one with the front ratail, she was dry-humping a little shipping magnate, who was throwing down some Forties-style ballroom-dancing moves on her in return. They were a funny couple, but they were going full Chinese-French Dirty Dancing out there.

Then the Whale was there, at the velvet ropes. When Traugott spotted him, he got this look in his eye: It's happening. In an instant, he'd ushered the Whale in. A Russian singer was really pouring her heart out on a rendition of "Bad Romance". What a pure voice, what presence; she might as well have been playing for Madison Square Garden instead of two dozen people on the edge of a random city in China. For some reason, I got an advertising catchphrase in my head: All for this one moment. I couldn't place it at the time, but I looked it up later, and it turned out to be the tagline for a campaign to market Lufthansa's First Class service. It was the perfect tagline

for this event, in that it doesn't totally make sense (all for what moment? The moment of flying somewhere on a plane? That's not a moment) – the old English-deployed-as-luxury-nonsense trick, the argot of Yachtland.

I'd first spotted the Whale earlier that day, at this Ferrari (cars) slash Ferretti (boats) party they were throwing at the very end of the last dock. He'd shown up just as the putrid pink sunset reached its fullest volume, casting the factories across the bay in shadow. They'd set up a little white tent from which they dispensed canapés and poured champagne for the guests. There weren't many of us. Maybe it was where we were, but it felt like this small group of us had been left behind on an abandoned planet and then told we were in a nightclub. The Whale of Whales had an assistant half a step in front of him and a beautiful woman half his age (a little third, I guessed) a step behind. He looked north of 60. There was none of that shiny Louis Vuitton workout-shirt stuff, no *tuhao* full-Burberry head to toe – he had a tan linen jacket and a black polo shirt like a resident of Yachtland should. On his head there was a little white golf cap that looked as if it had been placed there by a doting mother. As he walked, he created his own force field about nine feet in diameter; those of us who were standing in line for a chance to rev the engine on a marine-blue Ferrari just kind of parted as he walked past. For some reason I thought the Whale of Whales could provide some key to understanding this whole thing, though what it is I wanted to know from him I couldn't say. But before I could approach him, a small team of Ferretti salesmen in white golf shirts closed in, and in no time he was ensconced on the bridge of an Italian-made walnut-inlaid Ferretti pleasure craft that could have come from the same shipyard as Traugott's.

Now, that night at Sanlorenzo, the Whale of Whales and his companion stood to the side, watching the dance floor. Up close, he had a placid look on a face that, with his large fleshy mouth, was reminiscent of a fish that survived by vacuuming decomposed organic matter from the bottom of the ocean. His companion flipped through Sanlorenzo sales literature. This was my chance to buttonhole him, I thought. My translator told me that she should be carrying my briefcase when we approached; in the realm of face, a man of his stature would never take seriously someone who carried his own bag. Then she asked him: Would you like to be interviewed about boats by *GQ* magazine? "I'm sorry," he said, "I don't speak English." It was explained to me that in China, people don't say no, they say things like I don't speak English, even though it's clear you have a translator. Never once, the whole time I saw him, did he take his hands from behind his back. It seemed almost like a philosophy; he was someone who had other people who engaged with the world for him. I tried to imagine him using his hands to make a sandwich, and I couldn't.

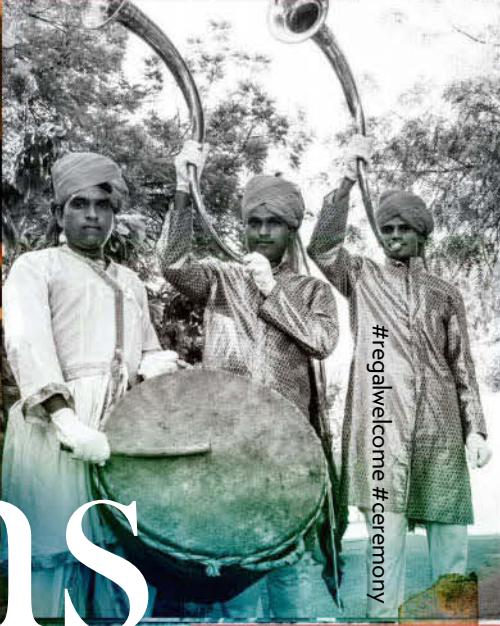
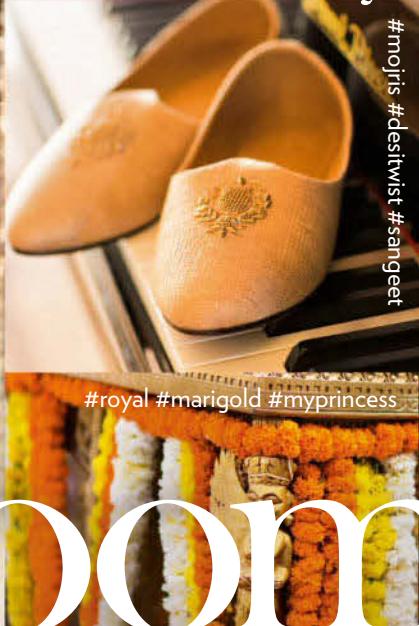
I went back to talking to the three henchmen of another whale, a shipping magnate from Dalian. Meanwhile, Traugott was moving through the crowd towards the Whale of Whales, whipping the party into an even more frenzied frenzy as he approached. He needed to show the Whale just the kind of (frenzied) world that yachts can create if you only let them. He was exhorting the singer for an encore, tugging Yulia and her caviar along, barking instructions to all of us. We were all his props. Everything, in fact, was a prop – the beach polo, the VIP tent, the nonsensical speeches in second languages delivered to no one, the female brand ambassadors with the gold parasols. It was all mood lighting to induce the Whale to fiscally mount the comely white yacht when it came time. All for this one moment.

"Come on," Traugott said Germanically, placing his bony little hand at the small of my back and pushing me with unexpected force out onto the dance floor, a pair of champagne flutes in his hand that he'd bring to the Whale. "You dance now. You dance now. We are making the party now. THIS IS DOING BUSINESS IN CHINA."

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GROOMING

EDITED BY SHIKHA SETHI

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FLIGHTS OF FANCY: AIRLINE DOPP KITS GET AN UPGRADE

Some airlines, aware that spiffily packaged freebies go a long way, are offering high-end amenities to combat high-altitude annoyances – fixing everything from chapped lips to dry hands. Here, the complimentary DOPP kits worth flying for

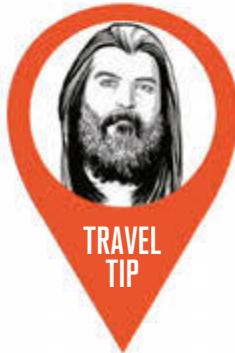


BEST INTERNATIONAL ECONOMY

CATHAY PACIFIC PREMIUM ECONOMY

THE FLIGHT: Mumbai to San Francisco (14h50m)

THE HIGHLIGHTS: In an era when there's literally no free lunch when flying Economy, Cathay still gets you key must-haves (in a bag designed by acclaimed Hong Kong-based Goods of Desire). Freshen up your breath with the toothpaste and toothbrush, relax in the plush socks and eye mask, then break open the botanicals-rich Jurlique Moisture Replenishing Day Cream. Apply mid-flight to give your skin an instant reset.



"I love mixing fragrances. It keeps the mystery alive. Right now, I'm using Terre D'Hermès and Acqua di Gio by Giorgio Armani. I spritz on the first scent and then, a few minutes later, the second. I recently bought a lovely limited edition bottle of Terre D'Hermès in their Hong Kong store. The other combination I like is YSL's Kouros + Hugo Boss' cologne for men."

—Suket Dhir
Designer



BEST INTERNATIONAL FIRST CLASS

ETIHAD DIAMOND FIRST CLASS

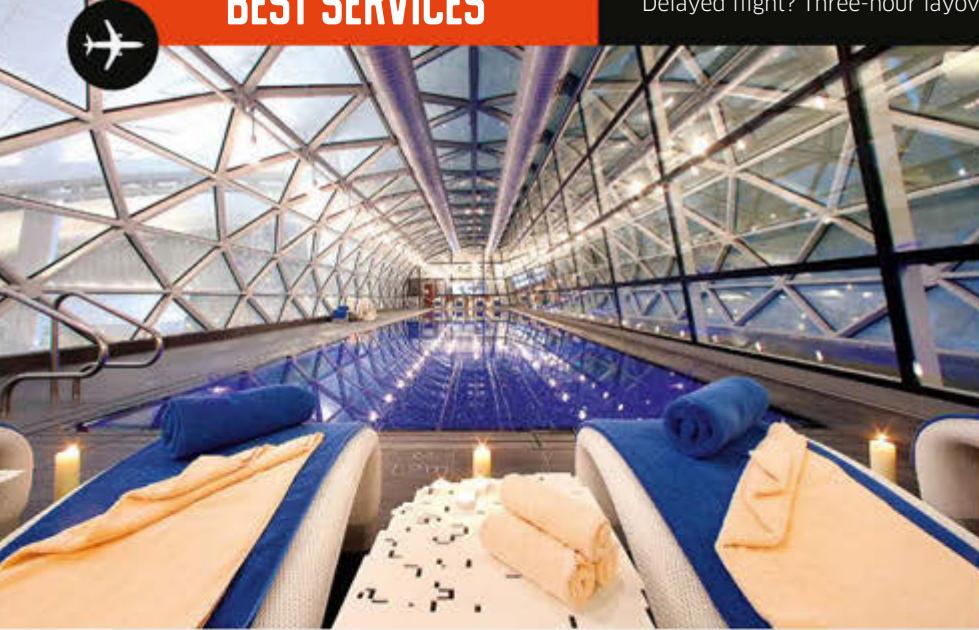
THE FLIGHT: Delhi to New York (16h30m)

THE HIGHLIGHTS: When crossing nine time zones, you're going to contend with more than just dehydration. Etihad offers a Schick Xtreme3 three-blade razor and shave cream to tackle scruff, a soothing scented pillow spray from Wessco to send you to sleep and products from French cult fave Le Labo. The Bergamote 22 Hand Cream moisturizes chapped skin that's tussled with unforgiving carry-ons.



BEST SERVICES

Delayed flight? Three-hour layover? Indulge yourself at these havens of luxury



BEST SPA

The Vitality Spa at Hamad International Airport, Doha

There's a futuristic 25-metre swimming pool that looks like something Zaha Hadid dreamed up, two squash courts, a buff fitness trainer on call in a state-of-the-art gym and a hot tub to soothe those aching muscles after. Expect to be treated like a king here – or an Emirati princeling, at the very least. Grapes, optional.



BEST FOOT MASSAGE

Orchid Foot Spa at Don Mueang International Airport, Bangkok

When you have time to kill before your domestic flight out of Bangkok on one of those cheerful "bus services", don't miss getting a foot massage at the Orchid Foot Spa. It's the smartest move you can make before boarding a full flight with Economy seats so cramped you have to hunch over and tuck in your legs for the entire flight. These magicians know their art: A 30- or 60-minute session with them will guarantee the happiest feet on board.



"An eye mask will keep you looking fresh – important for times when you have to jet out to a meeting straight after your flight. A gel-based one works wonders. Try Armand Diradourian for luxurious masks made from handmade cashmere."

—Nikhil Sharma
Founder, The Lacquer Embassy



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—DAVE BESSELING, Deputy Editor, *GQ* India

Where to get perfectly coiffed when you're away from home



MURDOCK LONDON

Modern dandies with man buns and bearded hipsters are regulars here, fine-tuning their regimes and buying products to maintain their manes. We like the Complete Travel Set with its quince and rosemary shampoo and Murdock's "Insta-inspiration" page, which features the coolest cuts to ask for. murdocklondon.com



TRAVEL TIP

"I carry a small carry-on bag or case with a book, a good pair of headphones (Bowers & Wilkins) and a notebook. Flying is a good time to think and create."

—Rikki Kher
Founder, Kardo



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Sidestep the street performers and walk into London's coolest new salon. There's an open-plan waiting area where you'll be served whisky, coffee or haggis (if you so choose) and offered a choice of manly treatments. We recommend the cut-throat shave and a twizzling of your 'tache that'll have your girlfriend back home wondering when (and where) you got so spiffy. ruffians.co.uk



HAAR BARBAAR, AMSTERDAM

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—MARLON HAZLEWOOD,
Photographer

THE CULT FAVOURITES YOU NEED TO KNOW

There was a time when labels like Kiehl's and Aēsop were considered undiscovered gems by those in the know. Now a new circle of indie products have developed a growing fan base so intense and loyal that their days in the shadows are numbered. Familiarize yourself with these five lines before everyone else does



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THE ETHOS

"We're so good, we'll never beg for business." The brand is off all social media (except Instagram, because "we love photography," says co-founder Fabrice Penot) and has even held "Sell Nothing Days"

BUZZ FACTOR

Ryan Reynolds wears Patchouli 24; Karl Lagerfeld prefers Neroli 36

FAN ENDORSEMENT

"You can't be a human being and not love Santal 33. Once a day, people come up to me and say, 'Oh my god, what is that smell?'"
—Jess Margolis, 38, TV developer in Los Angeles

THE STANDOUTS

Santal 33 and Rose 31 perfume oils
lelabofragrances.com



Hanz de Fuko

Organic hair products developed by three childhood friends out of San Francisco

There are more ways to style your hair than the basic side part. The team has created dozens of YouTube tutorials (you can learn how to get hair like Channing Tatum's or Andrew Garfield's)

Musicians and actors like Michael Fassbender and Hugh Jackman use the hybrid products

"I bring a lot of these products on set with me to share with stylists and other models, and everyone gets hooked."
—Joel Alexander, 25, model in New York and LA

Claymation (a clay/wax combination) and Quicksand (a wax/dry shampoo blend)
hanzdefuko.com



Juniper Ridge

A wilderness-fragrance distillery based in Oakland, California

Everyone should enjoy a fresh whiff of the California coast. Hikers and nature lovers camp in Big Sur, the Redwoods and other coastal regions to collect plants and distill their essences into soaps and colognes

Juniper Ridge produces limited-edition seasonal scents called Field Lab Fragrances. Winter Redwood sold out in days.

"They bring out a sense of place and time that no other brand does."
—Jonah Buffa, 38, co-owner of Fellow Barber in San Francisco

Yuba River BackPacker's Cologne, Cascade Glacier Trail Crew Soap
juniperridge.com



Triumph & Disaster

Skincare and shaving products by former New Zealand cricket star Dion Nash

Go outside and sweat, then clean up with the stuff that got you dirty. Hardworking ingredients derived from nature (like volcanic ash and green clay) are brought into a lab setting to maximize their performance

Ozzy Osbourne was seen buying Rock & Roll Suicide Face Scrub; Glee's Darren Criss likes the Shearers Soap.

"I thought Malin+Goetz's moisturizer was the be-all, end-all until I tried Gameface."
—Sean Kalember, 29, co-founder of Kaliber boutique in Sonoma County, California

Rock & Roll Suicide Face Scrub, Gameface Moisturizer
triumphanddisaster.com



Ursula Major

A Vermont-based skin and shave brand (named for the Great Bear constellation) that steers clear of parabens, sulfites and synthetic fragrances

Stop putting toxic chemicals on your face. The highly edited selection of products (there are only five) have a naturally spicy scent and get along with even the most sensitive skin types

Michael B Jordan and Michael Shannon have both used the balm and face wipes

"I have challenging skin. It's the only thing that works, because there's nothing harsh in it."
—Jason Viola, 35, project manager at a medical supply company in Boston

Fantastic Face Wash, Fortifying Face Balm, Essential Face Wipes
ursulamajorvt.com

HOW TO STAY FIT WHILE TRAVELLING

Vesna Jacobs and Sarah Dhar, fitness experts at **Zehen**, Delhi, give you the dope on staying healthy when you're on the move

Plan ahead

Check out where you're staying ahead of time. Will you have access to a gym? A trainer? If yes, book a few sessions in advance – even if you have to cancel later on. This way, you're committed. Alternatively, check for parks in your neighbourhood or for fitness studios where you can take a class or two (see below). The worst thing for your fitness regimen is to have long gaps.

Use your personal trainer wisely

Ask him or her to design an exercise plan for you before you leave town.

Keep moving

When in an airport, don't just stand on the moving walkways. Every little bit of walking helps. Carry your own bags and avoid using porter services. Think of it as functional training on the go.

Travel well

Ensure you stay hydrated with lots of water and get plenty of sleep. The altitude, along with changing time zones, can take a toll on your body.

Pack smart

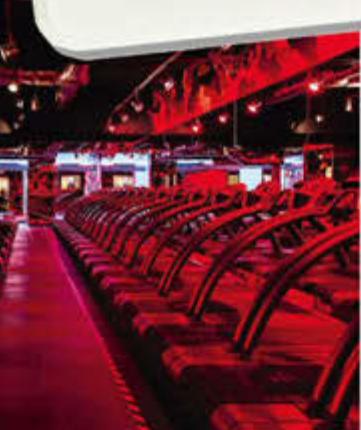
An iPod, inflatable weights, a good pair of sneakers and workout clothes. A skipping rope is a good bet for an anytime-anywhere workout.

Eat well

Carry snacks with you – bananas, apples, granola bars – so you never get low on energy. At night, skip the buffet and bread, and order a healthy breakfast the next morning. Most good hotels offer "lighter" options.

Book yourself a massage

Word.



TRAVEL TIP

"I always carry my essentials in a Nappa Dori toiletry bag. The one thing I never leave behind is a nail clipper. I'm OCD about my nails being neat. I also make it a point to hit up a MUJI store if I can. They have some of the best grooming gear around – multi-functional and compact, perfect for a frequent traveller like myself."

–Gautam Singh
Founder, Nappa Dori

LONDON

★ BARRY'S BOOTCAMP

Since 1998, Barry's Bootcamp has been delivering The Best Workout In The World® to a legendary following, including A-list celebs, models, even Olympic athletes. The signature hour-long workouts include 25-30 minutes of interval cardiovascular



grab a healthy snack in London), and a massage upstairs. lomaxpt.com

NEW YORK CITY

★ PILATES CHALLENGE

Joseph Pilates' legacy is best found here with trainers who have worked under the guidance of Romana Kryzanowska (one of Joseph's early students), including Brooke Siler, with whom you can book a one-to-one if you know your your dates well in time.

+1(212) 861-8300/1226;
Lexington Avenue (entrance on
E 83rd Street), New York, NY
10028; pilateschallenge.com



★ NATALIE UHLING

Natalie Uhling is the hottest property in the world of fitness right now. If you're looking for something energetic, she combines high-intensity training, kickboxing, core and body toning into a kickass, pumped-up workout. She's hot as hell, too, so if you're completely unfit, you might want to save yourself the embarrassment of not being able to keep up. natalieuhlingfitness.com

+2 MORE TO TRY:

PURE Yoga is fantastic for yoga and barre classes. **SoulCycle** (Bradley Cooper's a regular) or Flywheel have great spin classes in New York.

treadmill routines and 25-30 minutes of strength training with free weights, resistance bands and medicine balls. Trainers and workout segments vary throughout the week so no two classes are ever the same.

barrysbootcamp.com; no membership required. Classes also available in New York, Boston, LA, San Francisco and San Diego



adidas miCoach SMART RUN

watch, ₹25,000. With clever tech to track your heart rate and GPS to calculate the distance you cover, along with a built-in MP3 player and a customizable workout plan, this is the only personal trainer you'll need when you're on the go. Just don't leave the charger back at home – the battery drains faster than you can say "french fries with that please". shop.adidas.co.in ☺

YOU ARE ONE STEP CLOSER

A vibrant underwater scene featuring a large, textured coral reef in the background. The reef is surrounded by numerous small, colorful fish, primarily yellow and orange, swimming in various directions. The water is a clear, deep blue, and the sandy ocean floor is visible in the foreground, dotted with more coral and marine life.

DREAM DISCOVER EXPLORE THR

TO YOUR DREAM JOURNEY

A photograph of a scuba diver swimming over a vibrant coral reef. The diver is seen from behind, wearing a full scuba gear including a tank, fins, and a mask. The water is a clear blue, and numerous small, colorful fish are scattered throughout the scene, particularly around the coral.

Condé Nast
Traveller

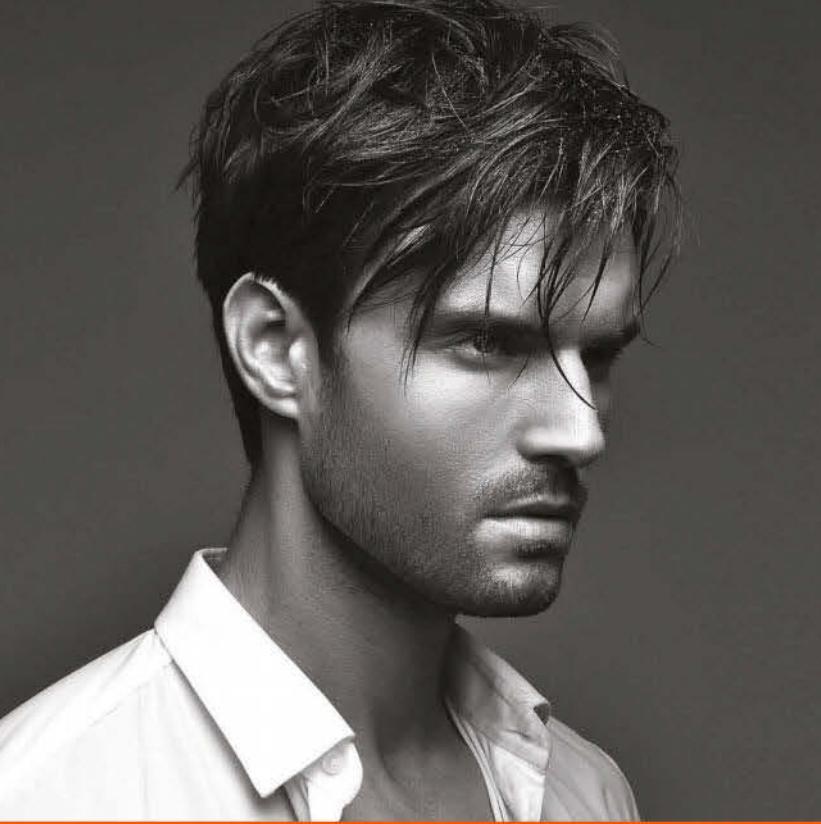
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Nehru Road, Vile Parle (East), Mumbai - 400099

● **A**
Accessorize Mumbai, Palladium, 022-6610 4358; Delhi, Ambience, 011-4087 0025
adidas Originals Mumbai, 99300 79114; Delhi, 011-4573 4261; Bengaluru, 080-4091 5678
Agent Provocateur Soirée (agentprovocateur.com)
Alexander Wang (alexanderwang.com)
Anuj Madaan Delhi, 98114 29246
Apple (apple.com/in)
Anton Heunis (antonheunis.com)
Atsuko Kudo (atsukokudo.com)
Allsaints (allsaints.com)
A. Lange & Söhne Mumbai, Time Avenue, 022-2651 5757; Delhi, Johnson Watch Co, 011-2464 2299
Audemars Piguet Mumbai, Time Avenue, 022-2651 5858; Delhi, Kapoor Watch Co, 011-4134 5678

● **B**
Breakbounce (breakbounce.com)
Bottega Veneta Mumbai, The Galleria, 022-3027 7090; Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4609 8272; Bengaluru, UB City, 080-4173 8931
Brooks Brothers Mumbai, 022-2265 9950; Delhi, Ambience, 011-4087 0786
Brown Boy (brownboy.in)
Burberry Mumbai, Palladium, 022-4080 1990; Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4652 9850; Bengaluru, UB City, 080-4173 8825
Bombay Electric Mumbai, 022-2287 6276
Breitling Mumbai, Times of Lord, 022-2369 5254; Delhi, Kapoor Watch Co, 011-4653 6667; Bengaluru, Rodeo Drive, 080-2227 1977
Breguet Mumbai, Time Avenue, 022-2655 2727; Delhi Johnson Watch Co, 011-4151 3121
Blancpain Mumbai, Time Avenue, 022-2652 5757; Delhi, Johnson Watch Co, 011-4151 3121
Baume & Mercier Mumbai, Ethos, 022-6640 6991; Delhi, Johnson Watch Co, 011-3294 5554; Bengaluru, Ethos, 080-4113 0611

● **C**
Calvin Klein Jeans Mumbai, 022-2648 4794; Delhi, 011-4059 7502; Bengaluru, 080-4098 6229
Christian Louboutin Mumbai, 022-4347 1787; Delhi, 011-4101 7111
Corneliani Mumbai, 022-6631 1303/4; Delhi, 011-4604 0722; Bengaluru, 080-4173 8170
Carl F. Bucherer Ethos Summit, Mumbai, 022-6615 0351; Delhi, 011-4058 8700; Bengaluru, 080-4099 9621
Cartier Mumbai, Rose, 022-2362 0275; Delhi, Johnson Watches Co, 011-4151 3121; Bengaluru, Rodeo Drive, 080-4124 8471

● **D**
Diesel Black Gold Mumbai, Palladium, 022-4004 6050;



Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4052 3915; Bengaluru, 080-4173 8004

Dior Homme Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4600 5900

Dior Watches Mumbai, 022-6749 9091; Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4600 5900

Dolce & Gabbana (dolcegabbana.com)

Dsquared2

See The Collective

Dunhill Delhi, 011-2336 6777; Bengaluru, UB City, 080-4173 8990

Ducati (ducati.com)

Da Milano Mumbai, Palladium, 022-4004 1395;

Delhi, DLF Promenade, 011-4660 9071

E
E. Tautz (etautz.com)

Emporio Armani Mumbai, Palladium, 022-4347 3211;

Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4604 0783; Bengaluru, UB City, 080-4146 9333

Ermenegildo Zegna

Mumbai, 022-2285 7000;

Delhi, 011-4606 0999

Etro Mumbai, Palladium, 022-4341 2294; Bengaluru, UB City, 080-4131 6924

Fendi Delhi, 011-4604 0777

G
Gas Mumbai, 022-2600 0008; Delhi, 011-4051 2669

Giorgio Armani Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4606 0948
Givenchy (givenchy.com)

Giuseppe Zanotti (giuseppezanottidesign.com)

Grenson (grenson.co.uk)

Gucci Mumbai, 022-3027

7060; Delhi, 011-4647 1111

Gucci Watches Mumbai, 022-2676 1000; Delhi, 011-4616 0501

Gaurav Gupta Mumbai, 022-2269 3433; Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4104 2989

Greubel Forsey Delhi, Swiss Promotion, 011-4616 0505

H
Hermès Mumbai, 022-2271

7400; Delhi, 011-4360 7780

Hugo Boss Mumbai, 080-4098 2100

K
Kenneth Cole Mumbai,

TRENCH COAT BY
PAUL SMITH. JUMPER BY **ETRO**. TROUSERS BY **JOHN VARVATOS**

022-2665 5560; Delhi, 011-4604 0773; Bengaluru, 080-2520 7200

I
Issey Miyake (issey Miyake.com)

IWC Mumbai, Time Avenue, 022-2651 5757; Delhi, Johnson Watch Co, 011-4151 3121; Bengaluru, Ethos Summit, 080-4099 9621

J
Jack & Jones Mumbai, 022-3057 2603; Delhi, 011-4087 0007; Bengaluru, 080-2208 6513

Jimmy Choo Mumbai, 022-3027 7070; Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4660 9069

John Varvatos

See The Collective

Jaeger-LeCoultre Mumbai, Rose, 022-2362 0275; Delhi, Kapoor Watch Co, 011-4134 5678; Bengaluru, Zimson, 080-4098 2100

K
Kenneth Cole Mumbai,

Quiksilver Mumbai, 022-6634 5011; Delhi, 011-4087 0727; Bengaluru, 080-6726 6376

WHERE TO BUY

THE MERCHANDISE FEATURED EDITORIALLY HAS BEEN ORDERED FROM THE FOLLOWING STORES. SOME SHOPS MAY CARRY A SELECTION ONLY. PRICES AND AVAILABILITY WERE CHECKED AT THE TIME OF GOING TO PRESS, BUT WE CANNOT GUARANTEE THAT PRICES WILL NOT CHANGE, OR THAT SPECIFIC ITEMS WILL BE IN STOCK WHEN THE MAGAZINE IS PUBLISHED. WE SUGGEST THAT, BEFORE VISITING A STORE, YOU CALL TO MAKE SURE THEY HAVE YOUR SIZE

Palladium, 022-4009 8685; Delhi, Ambience, 011-4606 0999

● **L**

Lacoste Mumbai, Palladium, 022-4347 0190; Delhi, DLF Promenade, 011-4617 0682; Bengaluru, 080-4147 6660

La Perla (aperla.com)

Louis Vuitton Mumbai, 022-6664 4134; Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4659 0000; Bengaluru, UB City, 080-4246 0000

L'agent by Agent Provocateur (agentprovocateur.com)

Louis Leeman (louisleemanparis.com)

LANVIN (lanvin.com)

● **M**

Moschino (moschino.com)
Marc Jacobs (marcjacobs.com)

Matches Fashion (matchesfashion.com)

Michael Kors Mumbai, 022-4002 8040

Montblanc Mumbai, 022-2285 2151

Morphe Manifesto

See Bombay Electric

Mr. Porter (mrporter.com)

Myla (myla.com)

● **N**

Nappa Dori Mumbai, 022-2368 4461; Delhi, 011-2656 3384

Nicole de Karl (nicoledecarlelondon.com)

● **O**

Oliver Sweeney (oliversweeney.com)

● **P**

Paul Smith Mumbai, Palladium, 022-6658 9960; Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4087 0784

Spykar Mumbai, 022-2593 0136; Delhi, 011-2516 1694;

Bengaluru, 080-6726 6310

Samsonite Mumbai, Atria, 022-2481 3404; Delhi, Select Citywalk, 011-4053 4577

Swatch Mumbai, 022-2481 3523; Delhi, 011-2981 9980

● **T**

The Bro Code (thebrocode.in)
The Collective Mumbai, 022-4343 8888; Delhi, 011-4087 8888; Bengaluru, 080-6767 8888

Thomas Pink Mumbai, Palladium, 022-4023 6090;

Delhi, Ambience, 011-4087 0783

Tom Ford Delhi, 011-4103 3059

Tod's Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4666 2700

Tommy Hilfiger Mumbai, 022-2646 2847;

Delhi, 99116 97222; Bengaluru, 080-2268 2091

Topman (topman.com)

Tumi Mumbai, Palladium, 022-6615 2295; Delhi, DLF Emporio, 011-4058 2318;

Bengaluru, 080-4173 8948

● **U**

U.S. Polo Assn. Mumbai, 022-4295 9518; Delhi, 011-4108 0026; Bengaluru, 080-2206 7663

● **V**

Vacheron Constantin Mumbai, DIA, 022-2204 2299; Delhi, Johnson Watch Co, 011-4151 3110

Vivienne Westwood See The collective

● **Z**

Zara Mumbai, Palladium, 022-4347 3850; Delhi, DLF Promenade, 011-4168 0853; Bengaluru, Phoenix Market City, 080-6726 6121

TURKISH DELIGHT

Sushant Singh Rajput's never looked better and having the **Çiragan Palace Kempinski** in Istanbul in the background certainly didn't hurt



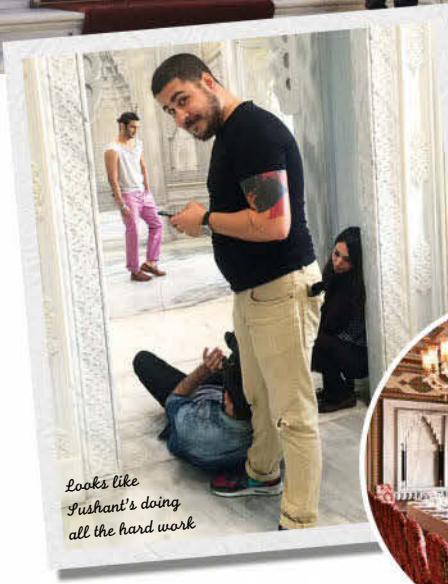
For more,
see
**WATCHING THE
CROWN** on
PAGE 186



It's no secret that Istanbul's architecture is as attractive as Angelina's pout. And to *really* experience it, with a dollop of the good life, the **Çiragan Palace Kempinski** hotel is the place to visit. Once home to the last Ottoman sultan, the palace is situated on the European shores of the Bosphorus, and features delicious food that hooked our fashion clotheshorse Sushant Singh Rajput during a two-day shoot with *GQ*.

Each morning, the actor tucked into a lavish breakfast buffet at the Laledan restaurant, while dinners consisted of the Lamb Külbastı and Testi Kebab at Tugra, one of the top 25 restaurants in the world. Add to that a stay in the Sultan suite – one of the largest in Europe – and a massive luxurious hammam, and the Çiragan is sure to see Sushant return for his next holiday – or perhaps another *GQ* shoot. ☺

Ciragan Palace Kempinski
Çiragan Caddesi 32,
Istanbul, Turkey 34349
Tel: +90 212 326 4646
kempinski.com/istanbul





For more,
see **THE
HOMELAND'S
HOTTEST EXPORT**
on PAGE 126



Photographer R Burman gets a cheeky shot



In the spotlight

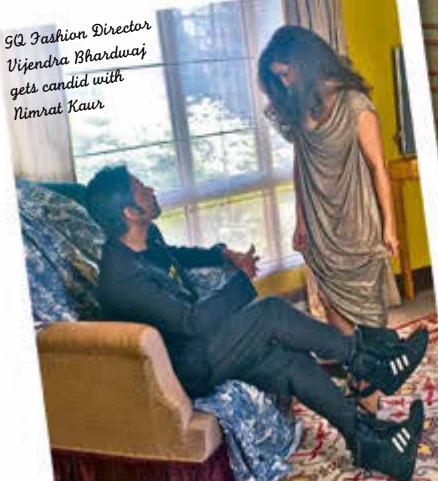


GOOD GIRL GONE BAD

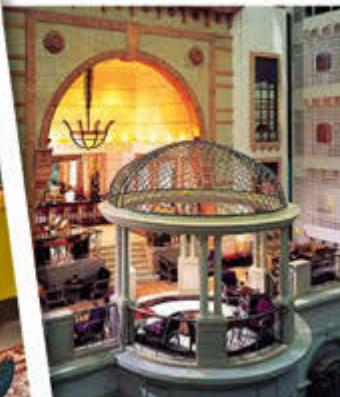
Nimrat Kaur's transformation from *The Lunchbox* and *Homeland* to GQ cover star took a palatial setting – and a little latex

The Shivaji Suite at the **ITC Maratha** in Mumbai took us on a trip back in time: we were met with high ceilings, traditional Indian architecture and art (including portraits of Chhatrapati Shivaji) and a lavish bath-much to the delight of our cover star, Nimrat Kaur.

But when she came out in a corsetted Vivienne Westwood dress, Hermès riding crop in hand, there was no question that this girl-next-door was all modern-day *GQ* woman. ☺



GQ Fashion Director
Vijendra Bhardwaj
gets candid with
Nimrat Kaur



ITC Maratha
Sahar, Andheri East,
Mumbai – 400099
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BUSINESS OR PLEASURE?

The Business Travel Special

This summer, if you're travelling for work, Condé Nast Traveller's Business Travel Special has you covered. Meet ten head honchos and discover the world they travel in—the why, how and what to do in between business hours revealed. Then, discover Venice with Pernia Qureshi's fashionista's guide to the city of romance. Also in this issue, 50 food souvenirs from around the world, a vegetarian's guide to Bangkok and explore where the wild roam—the summer safaris to book right away. See a different side of the world with Condé Nast Traveller's April/May issue.

APRIL-MAY 2015 ISSUE ON STANDS NOW



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TOP SHELF



ALL THAT'S HOT THIS SUMMER. TAKE YOUR PICK



Sun cheaters ↑

While sifting through this season's trends, we came across the stunning Marc Jacobs Eyewear Collection, which conveys contemporary style, in a smart blend of elegance and edgy. These acetate sunglasses exhibit an alluring mix of colour and material. The slim silhouette of these frames enhanced by a sophisticated metal frame gives structure and lightness to its shape. With various colour options to suit different moods and personalities, these sunglasses come with a stylish three-cube hinge on the sides.

● Priced ₹19,400. Available at leading optical retailers across the country



Spring this Summer

Greece may be the cradle of civilization, but it is also one of the world's most popular wellness destinations. With 850 thermal and mineral springs at different geographical locations, the country offers several rejuvenating experiences in true Mediterranean style. From hammams and hydromassages to thalassotherapy and detox regimes with the healing properties of seaweed, sea mud and local herbs, a few days at a wellness retreat or luxury resort here will refresh you like never before.

● For more information, log on to Visitgreece.gr



← CHOO ON FRAGRANCE

Jimmy Choo introduces its first perfume for men, Jimmy Choo MAN. With the woody freshness of a fougère forest, it opens with lavender notes tempered by mandarin and honeydew melon. While its heart notes make way for a delicate fusion of pink pepper, geranium and pineapple leaf, it finally unveils patchouli, suede and amber wood. Packaged in a bottle that mimics the antique hip flask, Jimmy Choo MAN effortlessly channels the rebellious but oh-so-seductive vibe of rock 'n' roll.

● Priced ₹6,099 (100ml) and ₹2,801 (30 ml). Available at leading perfume retailers across India



Foot loose ↑

Knock your socks off with FREWICK LACE by Clarks. Smart and casual, it's the perfect footwear for scorching summer months. Crafted from premium leather to offer superior flexibility, these stylish shoes are best worn without socks. With understated details and a subtle finish, these shoes will take you from a sweltering day well into an evening of summer fun. Team this pair with linen trousers, throw on a polo shirt and a linen jacket, and you're good to go.

● Priced ₹5,999. Available at leading Clarks stores across India

Heady sheen →

Kérastase introduces Beautifying Oil Crème by Elixir Ultime – a unique potion that infuses the goodness of precious oils with cream. Whether you're using it to sculpt your mane or restore the dazzle of your tresses, Kérastase Beautifying Oil Crème by Elixir Ultime is a unique styling product that will not weigh down the hair fibre. Furthermore, its signature scent, which effortlessly fuses rose, jasmine and lily of the valley with cedar and musk, keeps you feeling crisp all day long.

● Priced ₹2,200 (150ml). Available at select retail outlets and Kérastase salons across India





Summer of '75

Founded in 1975, TUMI celebrates 40 years of design excellence with a limited-edition collection aptly titled '1975.' Due to launch this April, this compilation comprises a stylish carry-on, a slim briefcase, a rucksack and a square duffel, all crafted from natural, full grain cowhide leather and embossed with a special number. While it pays homage to the brand's founding year, The 1975 Collection embodies the meticulous craftsmanship, technical innovation and functional superiority that TUMI is renowned for.

● Prices on request. For more information, visit Tumi.com

In your jeans →

For the spring of 2015, Levi's® introduces the new 501® CT (Customized & Tapered) and offers its much-loved Original

501® jeans in an extensive range of sizes, colours and finishes. Depending on your style and preference, they can be worn slim, regular or relaxed. With authentic denim washes, inspired by San Francisco – the birthplace of Levi's® – this line is a celebration of the brand's past, present and future.

● Priced ₹3,501. Available at select Levi's® stores across India



← Scent of power

Composed by legendary perfumer Michel Almairac from Robertet, the new Jaguar Innovation is a fragrance that finds inspiration in the fast and furious Jaguar F-Type sports car. Fresh, woody and seductive in nature, the eau de toilette opens with bergamot, mandarin and the spicy aroma of coriander. With iris, patchouli and cedar at its heart, it eventually reveals the masculine undertones of leather, musk and vanilla. Bottled in a glass flacon that reflects the free-flowing form of a Jaguar vehicle, this perfume has a charismatic effect.

● Priced ₹3,800 (100ml). Available at leading retail stores across India



Case of Comfort →

Good-looking, brightly hued and incomparably functional, Marshmallow by Samsonite is much more than just a suitcase. Half carry-on rolling tote, half personal seat, the Marshmallow flaunts a smart, ergonomic curved design and a meticulously constructed aluminium frame that makes it sturdy enough to hold the weight of a seated adult for long hours without losing its shape. Marshmallow offers excellent manoeuvrability, allowing you to zip across busy terminals without breaking a sweat.

● Price on request. Available at Samsonite stores and leading retail outlets across India



Get Shady ↑

The Tom Ford Eyewear Spring/Summer 2015 collection showcases a provocative new array of sunglasses. With clean lines and striking new ways of merging acetate and metal, the menswear range offers a wide variety of aviator-inspired silhouettes. The pair showcased here is called the Vanda. Its swooping, slightly futuristic silhouette that wraps around the visage gives you a confident and unorthodox look. The grey and violet mask lenses, micro-screws at the temples and the signature Tom Ford detail come together to offer a dramatic effect.

● Priced ₹28,350 (approx). Available at leading eyewear retailers across India



**Dear environmentalists,
tree-huggers and greenies,**

We can see you're reaching the end of your tether. And we agree: the world is a soulless toilet and we're all going to die badly. But before you decide to do anything drastic like blow up an oil rig or assassinate a Japanese whaler, we think it's time you take a few deep breaths and look around. Who, exactly, are you doing this for? Us? The rest of humanity? Or for yourself?

We're going to tell you the same thing we told our doctor when he said our hedonistic lifestyles aren't sustainable: Who the fuck cares? We're past the point of no return as a species and as a planet. The floods are coming, global warming is going to roast us. We're doomed, and we're as spiritually vacant as we are intellectually overtaxed. So fuck it, we're going to enjoy ourselves. A lot.

We don't mean to sound insensitive. We wrote this letter on a piece of recycled paper and delivered it to the printers in the beak of a passenger pigeon that looked like it needed some cardio, so that when you receive it you will catch that Gaia-friendly chi, and don't have to guilt yourself over its carbon footprint. Just send little Dewey back to us please, we've got a nice marinade waiting for him in the kitchen.

We kid. We don't really eat bird meat. We save all our room for bacon. And we don't care that cow farts are killing the ozone layer or whatever. But seriously you guys, doesn't it get tedious being so goddamn careful all the time? Doesn't separating your trash into different organic baskets make you feel like a fastidious dweeb? Aren't you tired of driving a car that's smaller than the toys we used to play with when we were kids? Don't you get bored of rescuing animals to keep you company? Even Snuggles the street dog thinks you're a bit of a soft option, and we bet limiting yourself to eco-friendly rainwater showers doesn't do much for your social life either. The ship's going down, man, now's the time to get out and party.

Look, we're not nihilists. We're just helping the earth reach its predestined fate according to the cultural maps of our forebears. While you're teaching kids to plant saplings to end deforestation, we're buying Amazon-felled lumber to erect our exclusionist gated communities. Because look, no matter what you do, what any of us do, our planet is dead. We should have given two shades of shite sometime around the Iran Oil Crisis, back when we had a chance. We've chosen to embrace late-capitalist laissez-faire and are having a blast, letting 'er rip until it all goes down. So unplug your electric car, give the leftover quinoa to Snuggles and come join us on the dark side. We're fucked anyway, and it's way more fun over here.

Bottoms up,

GQ India



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